



8-1939

# The Effect of Pittman Center on the Community Life

Russell Hall

*University of Tennessee - Knoxville*

---

## Recommended Citation

Hall, Russell, "The Effect of Pittman Center on the Community Life. " Master's Thesis, University of Tennessee, 1939.  
[https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk\\_gradthes/3312](https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_gradthes/3312)

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at Trace: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Masters Theses by an authorized administrator of Trace: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange. For more information, please contact [trace@utk.edu](mailto:trace@utk.edu).

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Russell Hall entitled "The Effect of Pittman Center on the Community Life." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in Sociology.

William E. Cole, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

W.B. Jones

Accepted for the Council:  
Dixie L. Thompson

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

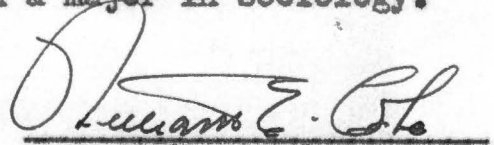
---



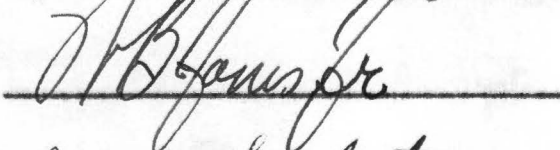
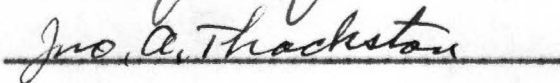
August 8, 1939

To the Committee on Graduate Study:

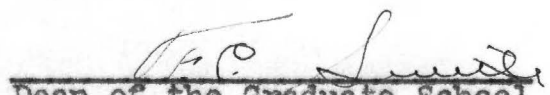
I am submitting to you a thesis written by Russell Hall entitled "The Effect of Pittman Center on the Community Life." I recommend that it be accepted for nine quarter hours credit in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in Sociology.

  
Major Professor

We have read this thesis  
and recommend its acceptance:

Accepted for the Committee

  
Dean of the Graduate School

THE EFFECT OF PITTMAN CENTER  
ON THE  
COMMUNITY LIFE

---

A THESIS

Submitted to  
The Committee on Graduate Study  
of  
The University of Tennessee  
in  
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the degree of  
Master of Arts

---

by  
Russell Hall  
August 1939

## PREFACE

The author has undertaken this study for the purpose of finding out how and to what extent Pittman Center has affected the lives of the people served by it. The author has tried not to have a biased attitude toward the study but has tried to evaluate as accurately as possible the real values of the settlement school in the community.

The study has been pursued over six years since the author has been a teacher in the school, and a pastor of some of the small mission churches in the vicinity. To obtain more definite information on the influence of the school, a month was taken in the economics class to study the community quite thoroughly. Each pupil took his own neighborhood as his own project. These neighborhoods included some of the best farming land in the county and certainly some of the worst. During the month's study, outlines were given the pupils on the various subjects, such as housing, farm equipment, crops, etc. Each day the pupils brought in their findings and the materials were carefully checked. The sincere effort of the nine pupils in the economics class leads the writer to believe that they pursued their work objectively, and did it carefully. To get another picture of the community, a questionnaire, filled out by all the pupils of the school from the third grade through the high school, has been used. One hundred-sixty

questionnaires were returned to the writer out of one hundred seventy-five which were distributed. Whenever a pupil objected to answering the questions he was encouraged to leave them out or to refrain entirely from filling out the questionnaire. Many pupils asked their parents about the questions preliminary to filling it out.

I am deeply indebted to Dr. William E. Cole and Dr. W. B. Jones, Jr. for their suggestions as the study was pursued; to my wife, Mrs. Gladys Hall, for assisting me in the work; to Dr. J. S. Burnett who gave me much of the development of the school; to Dr. R. F. Thomas for allowing me to use his records; to county superintendent, Theron Hodges; and to the pupils of the economics class, Grace Free, Ashley Green, Evelyn Carr, Ray Stamey, Boyd Shultz, Ralph Price, George Price, Eugene Huskey, and Carl Ownsby, for their help with the questionnaires used in the study.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
Sevier County settlement schools . . . . .	4
History of Pittman Center . . . . .	5
Conditions in Pittman Center Community . . . . .	8
The setting . . . . .	8
II. THE BREAKDOWN OF ISOLATION . . . . .	22
The effect of isolation on the individual . . . . .	22
Illiteracy as a form of isolation . . . . .	23
The religion of the isolated people . . . . .	25
The building of roads . . . . .	26
Newspapers and radios . . . . .	29
III. CHANGES IN THE AESTHETIC LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY . . . . .	33
Good reading in the community . . . . .	36
The churches and cultural development . . . . .	38
Beauty in the homes . . . . .	41
IV. CHANGES IN THE RECREATIONAL LIFE OF PITTMAN COMMUNITY . . . . .	42
The church as a recreational institution . . . . .	42
Dances and "rooster" fights . . . . .	43
Informal recreation . . . . .	45
Present recreation . . . . .	45



## CHAPTER

## PAGE

## IV. (continued)

Radios . . . . .	46
Motion picture attendance . . . . .	47
Ball games . . . . .	48
Games preferred by the pupils . . . . .	49
The importance of "sings" as recreation . .	51

## V. THE ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF THE SCHOOL ON THE

COMMUNITY LIFE . . . . .	53
Crops experimented with by the school . . .	55
Topography of the land in the community . .	56
Money crops . . . . .	60
Lack of tools and stock on the farms . . .	62

## VI. EDUCATIONAL EFFECTS OF THE SCHOOL . . . . . 68

Training of teachers in the county . . . .	69
Salaries . . . . .	72
Salaries of high school teachers . . . . .	73
School equipment . . . . .	75
Courses of study . . . . .	77
School attendance . . . . .	78
Education received by the parents . . . . .	81
Conclusion . . . . .	82

## VII. THE EFFECT OF PITTMAN SCHOOL UPON THE HOMES

AND THE HOME LIFE . . . . .	83
-----------------------------	----

## CHAPTER

## VII. (continued)

Comparison of homes of yesterday with

homes of today . . . . . 89

Homes of school graduates and others . . . 89

## VIII. THE EFFECTS OF THE SCHOOL UPON THE HEALTH

OF THE PEOPLE . . . . . 92

The work of the doctor and the nurse . . . 94

Number of calls . . . . . 95

Clinics . . . . . 97

Obstetrical cases . . . . . 98

Getting other agencies to help . . . . . 98

Opposition to medical work . . . . . 99

## IX. RELIGIOUS AND ETHICAL EFFECTS OF THE SCHOOL . 101

Moral effects of the school . . . . . 105

## X. THE EFFECT OF GOVERNMENT AGENCIES ON THE

COMMUNITY LIFE . . . . . 108

Great Smoky Mountain National Park . . . . 108

Possible bad effects of the Park . . . . . 109

Possible good effects of the Park . . . . . 111

The effects of the "New Deal" on the

community . . . . . 114

## XI. CONCLUSION . . . . . 117

What can be done to improve Pittman? . . . 119

CHAPTER	PAGE
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	122
APPENDIXES . . . . .	124
APPENDIX A. Questionnaire on Pittman Center	
Community . . . . .	125
APPENDIX B. Schedules used by the economics class in	
surveying their neighborhoods . . . . .	129



# LIST OF TABLES

TABLE		PAGE
I.	Mission Schools and the Agencies Which Sponsor Them in the Southern Highlands . .	1
II.	Denominational Schools in the Southern Appalachian Region of College and Junior College Grade . . . . .	2
III.	Population of Sevier County by Districts 1850-1930 . . . . .	16
IV.	Number of Automobiles in Some of the Neighborhoods Served by Pittman Center . .	28
V.	Number of Automobiles Owned by the Parents of the School Children . . . . .	29
VI.	Newspapers and Magazines Taken by the Homes of the Pittman Center Pupils . . . . .	30
VII.	Radios and Telephones Found in the Homes of the Pupils . . . . .	31
VIII.	Radio Programs Preferred by Pupils in School.	34
IX.	Secular Songs Preferred by the Pupils . . . .	35
X.	Books Reported in the Pupils' Homes . . . . .	37
XI.	Books Used Most in the Homes . . . . .	37
XII.	Religious Songs Preferred by Pupils . . . . .	40
XIII.	Radios in Nine Neighborhoods of Sevier County	47
XIV.	Games Preferred by the Pupils . . . . .	49

## TABLE

XV.	Games Played at Home . . . . .	50
XVI.	Attitude of Pupils Toward "Sings" . . . . .	51
XVII.	Size and Topography of the Farms in the Pittman Center Community . . . . .	57
XVIII.	Size of Farms, Tenancy, and Amount of Corn Raised . . . . .	59
XIX.	Money Crops Raised in the Community . . . . .	60
XX.	Crop Acreage for Different Neighborhoods . . . . .	61
XXI.	Live Stock on the Farms . . . . .	64
XXII.	Tools on the Farms . . . . .	65
XXIII.	Training of Sevier County Teachers for Selected Years . . . . .	70
XXIV.	Training of Elementary Teachers of Pittman Center . . . . .	71
XXV.	Salaries of Elementary Teachers of Sevier County . . . . .	73
XXVI.	Salaries of High School Teachers of Sevier County . . . . .	74
XXVII.	Enrollment and Average Daily Attendance at Pittman High School . . . . .	79
XXVIII.	Housing Facilities and Conditions in Pittman Center Community . . . . .	84
XXIX.	Housing Equipment and Facilities by School Levels of Pupils . . . . .	86

TABLE

PAGE

XXX.	Number of Children in Families in This Generation and the Preceding Generation . .	92
XXXI.	Church Attendance and Membership in the Community . . . . .	104

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

ILLUSTRATION	PAGE
1. Map of Pittman Center and Environs . . . . .	10
2. Chart 1. Population of Sevier County 1790-1930 . . . . .	12
3. Chart 2. Percentage of Negro Population in Sevier County 1790-1930 . . . . .	14
4. Chart 3. Number of People for Each Square Mile in Sevier County 1790-1930 . . . . .	15
5. Chart 4. Population Pyramid for Sevier County 1850 Showing the Per Cent of Population in Each Age Group . . . . .	18
6. Chart 5. Population Pyramid for Sevier County 1930 Showing the Per Cent of Population in Each Age Group . . . . .	19
7. Chart 6. Births and Deaths of Sevier County 1927-1937. . . . .	20

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

An interesting development of the educational system of the Southern Appalachian Highlands has been the establishment of schools by religious and philanthropic organizations. Very often the work has been in the form of purely missionary enterprises. The projects have been popular among the people of the North and they have been better supported during the recent depression than have most of the missionary enterprises of the large cities.

The extent of the work of different denominations in the Southern Appalachians is shown in the following tables:

TABLE I

MISSION SCHOOLS AND THE AGENCIES WHICH  
SPONSOR THEM IN THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

Agency	Number of schools
Methodist Episcopal	17
Evangelical	3
Presbyterian U.S.A.	8
Independent	21
Presbyterian U.S.	17
Southern Baptist	17
Disciples	4
Brethern	2
Reformed	2
M. E. South	8



TABLE I (continued)

MISSION SCHOOLS AND THE AGENCIES WHICH  
SPONSOR THEM IN THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

Agency	Number of schools
Congregational	1
Episcopal	20
Not known	6
S. D. B.	4
Presbyterian, United	3
Lutheran	2
Northern Baptist	1
Friends	1

TABLE II

DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOLS IN THE SOUTHERN  
APPALACHIAN REGION OF COLLEGE AND JUNIOR  
COLLEGE GRADE<sup>1</sup>

Agency	Number of schools
Presbyterian	2
Independent	4
Methodist Episcopal	3
M. E. South	5
Southern Baptist	1
Presbyterian U.S.A.	3
Northern Baptist	1
Disciples	1
Lutheran	1
S. B. D.	1

<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth Robbins Hooker, Religion in the Highlands (New York: Home Missions Council, 1933). These tables were compiled from Table I in the appendix of the book.

By comparing the two tables we find that some of the denominations established schools of college grade while others concentrated on high schools and elementary schools. The former Methodist Episcopal Church South had eight schools of which five were of college or junior college grade. In evaluating the work of these various schools, one must consider their size and grade to determine their relative importance.

There are approximately one hundred fifty such schools in the Southern Highlands. The number is gradually decreasing, which does not mean that many schools are being closed, but the schools are being taken over by the counties as they are able to assume full responsibility for their support. The functions of the schools are also changing, sometimes from a regular day school to a private boarding school. Probably the most noticeable change has been the conversion of many high schools into junior colleges or senior colleges where such are needed.<sup>2</sup>

The mission schools have done much to raise the cultural level of the mountain people, but there remain many communities where the schools have not as yet penetrated. Miss Armstrong, writing in the Yale Review, says,

---

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 248.

It may be urged in answer that the missionary schools maintained by the various denominations in the southern mountains ought to have exerted a beneficial influence, and unquestionably they have. But these schools are scattered at wide intervals over what is after all a pretty extensive territory.<sup>3</sup>

It is the opinion of Alva W. Taylor that these schools have done much for these beleaguered people, but the curriculum tends to be standardized too much like the public school.<sup>4</sup>

Raine once wrote, ". . . the school, like the church, should minister to the whole community in everything that tends to growth, to learning, to self-improvement, to bread, to beauty, to truth, and to brotherhood."<sup>5</sup> In some of the mountain mission schools this goal is being realized better than in the average public school. Whole communities are being remade by the influence of such schools.

### Sevier County Settlement Schools

In Sevier County, Tennessee, are found four settlement schools of high school level at the present time: Chilhowee Institute near the Knox County line established by the Southern Baptist Association in 1940; Smoky Mountain Academy

---

<sup>3</sup> Anne W. Armstrong, "The Southern Mountaineer," Yale Review, March, 1935.

<sup>4</sup> Alva W. Taylor, "Social Aid Comes to the Mountaineer," Christian Century, January 10, 1935.

<sup>5</sup> James Watt Raine, The Land of Saddlebags (New York: Published jointly by the Council of Women for Home Missions and Missionary Education Movement for the United States and Canada, 1924).



established also by the Baptists in 1915; Pi Beta Phi Settlement School at Gatlinburg; and Pittman Center. The Methodist Church did have Murphy Collegiate Institute at Sevierville, but it closed its doors in 1934 because it could not compete with the County High School there. The buildings were sold to the Church of God which has a school there at present, but very few of the pupils come from Sevier County. The Presbyterians have a small, but important, grade school on the line between Sevier and Cocke Counties. In earlier times were found other small schools, one run by the Presbyterians between Sevierville and Gatlinburg, and another in Greenbrier run by the Methodist Church.<sup>6</sup> With the coming of better county schools, supported partly by the state, the need for outside help was not so urgent.

#### History of Pittman Center

Quite often the young man who leaves his mountain home and makes a success in the cities of the valley soon forget the people with whom he was reared, but that was not the case with Dr. J. S. Burnett who was reared near Webster, North Carolina. As a minister he was always interested in the people of the mountains and did a great deal of missionary

---

<sup>6</sup> A statement made by Dr. J. S. Burnett who supervised the school in Greenbrier.

work among them even before he started his school work in the mountains in a formal way. During his active life, so he told the writer, he established twenty-four schools of elementary and high school levels. All of the schools except three have been taken over by the counties entirely and two of the three are partly financed by the counties.

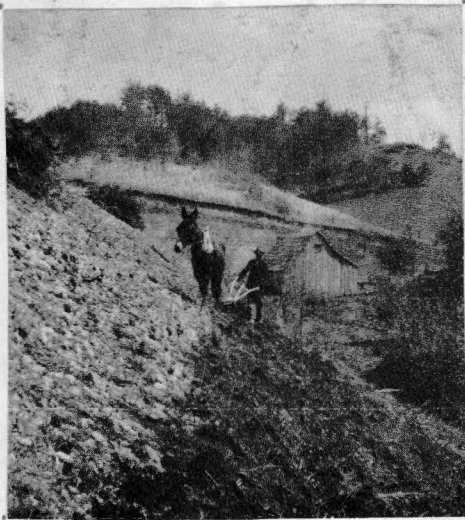
Another man who worked with Dr. Burnett was Dr. Eli Pittman, for whom the center was named. Dr. Pittman was at the time the district superintendent of the Elmira District of the Methodist Church in New York. Much of the money for the building of Pittman Center and much of the money for its support through the years has come from New York.

Work was started on raising the money, locating the school, and planning the work in 1918. Local people gave some timber and some time to build the school, but as a whole the money came from outside sources. In 1921 the main building was constructed at a cost of about thirty thousand dollars. The equipment was hauled over the rough mountain road from Sevierville seventeen miles away. The river often became so high that it was impossible to ford it for days, so the school was isolated from the outside world.

Dr. Burnett found that the community was largely Baptist, but a few Methodist Churches had been established there in the early days by the circuit riders. These Methodist Churches had been liberalizing forces in the community where fatalistic ideas were prevalent. Here was a



Pittman Community Center



A Field



An Older Home



locality with nearly 2,500 people in the two nearest districts with no adequate educational system. Here was a field that challenged the best that Dr. Burnett could give.

The school itself started with only a few pupils. In 1926 the high school had grown to thirteen students taught by the principal and one other teacher.<sup>7</sup> Last year the high school had about ninety net enrollment, and the grade school had about two hundred. The one school building was outgrown and other buildings were used. This last year a new grade building was built with four classrooms and an auditorium; also in the last year a new home economics building was constructed. The school buildings are adequate to take care of the needs of the community. Since 1927 the school has been rated as a class B high school.

#### Conditions in Pittman Center Community

The setting. The school itself is situated at the mouth of Webbs Mountain and the main range of the Great Smoky Mountains. At the time the school was established it was as suitable a place topographically as any, but the establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park has restricted its territory on one side. When the school was

---

<sup>7</sup> A statement made by Mr. Luther Flynn, the principal.


### THE MAP

In the homes found on the map of Pittman Center and its environs, live 87 families with a total of 405 people or 4.65 people per family. These people live in 9.38 square miles of land, making 43.17 people per square miles. Twelve people live within the Park. Outside the Park 52.38 people to the square mile are found. Forty-two people are dependent on Pittman directly. When it is considered that approximately one-fourth of the land shown on the map is cleared land, it can be seen that one cause of poverty is over-population.

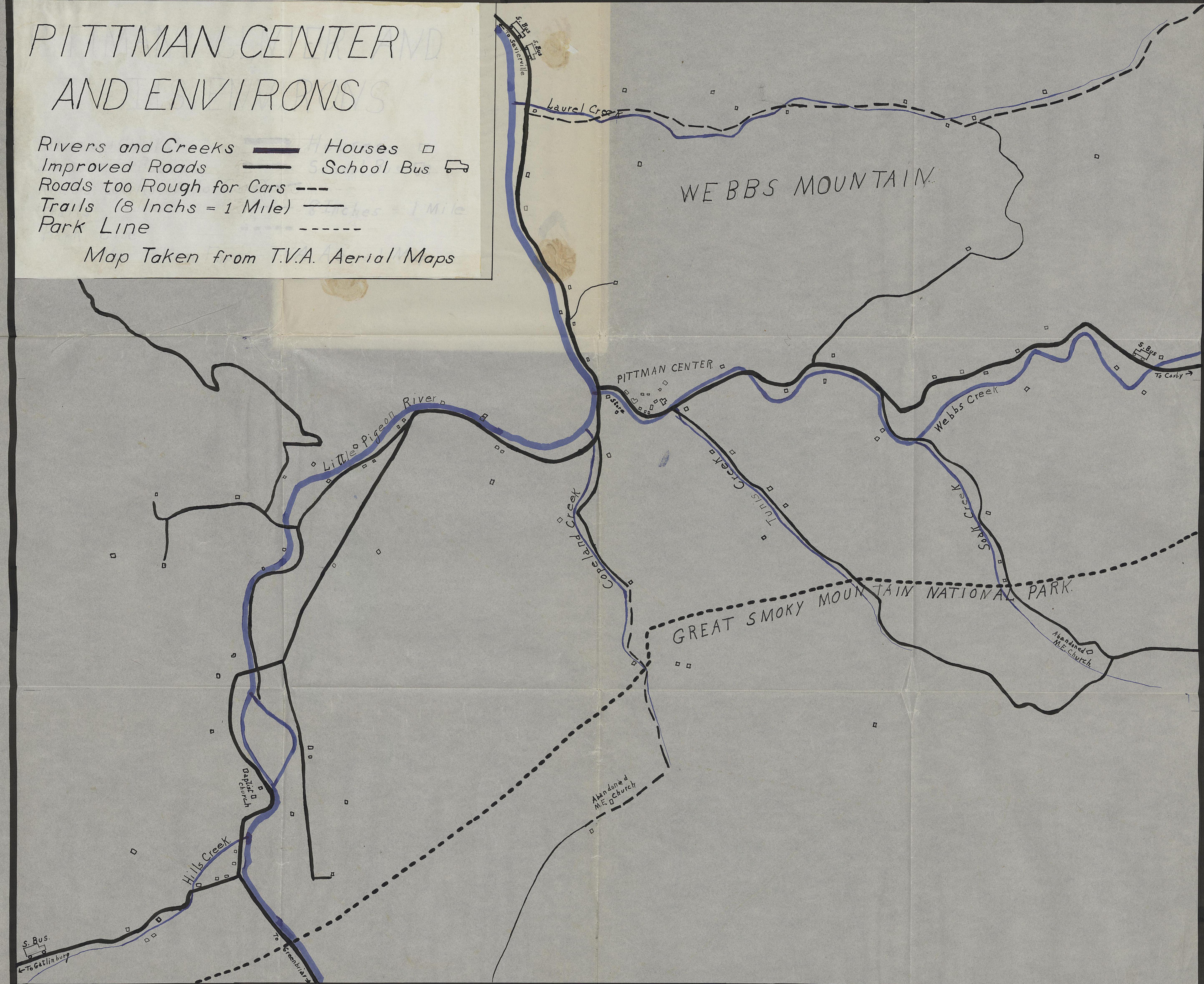
Outside the Park the places where no houses are seen are areas which are too rough for farming. Every suitable place has already been cleared.



# PITTMAN CENTER AND ENVIRONS

Rivers and Creeks ——— Houses □  
Improved Roads ——— School Bus   
Roads too Rough for Cars - - -  
Trails (8 Inchs = 1 Mile) ———  
Park Line - - - - -

Map Taken from T.V.A. Aerial Maps





established there were hundreds of youths in every direction who needed an education. There was also a great need for the kind of work a settlement school is able to do. The farmers along the creeks and the river were quite prosperous, but on the mountain side of the main range of the Great Smokies the farmers were poor and they had difficulty supplying the physical needs of their bodies without considering their aesthetic and recreational needs. The school at the present time serves these two types of people (the hill farmers and the valley farmers), the latter group being, by far, the larger. Before the establishment of the Park three lumber companies had timber land in this part of the county so the men could cultivate their little farms during the summer and then get a few months work in a lumber camp and live quite well. Since this source of employment is gone the people are compelled to depend on their little farms for a livelihood. This makes for much poverty since the land is poor and quite often their methods of farming are not suited to their soil. Some of the families do not have as much as a hundred dollars a year in cash income to spend for their needs. Let us look at the population trends of Sevier County and the pressure of population upon the land.

Chart 1 shows that for fifty years (1800-1850) there was a healthy increase in population although that was possibly a time when many were moving farther west. For the

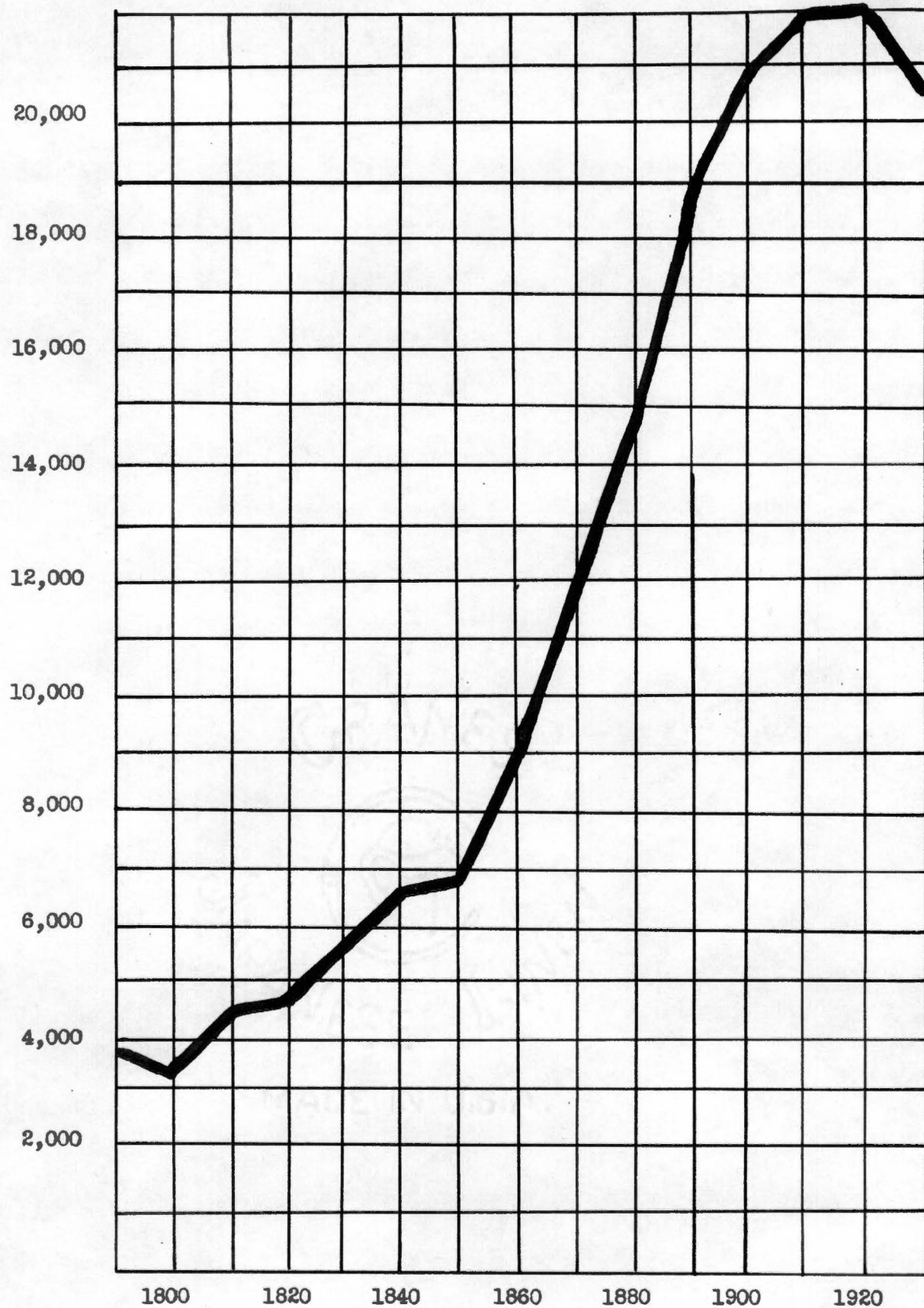


Chart 1. Population of Sevier County 1790-1930  
(Taken from the U. S. Census Reports)



next fifty years the population increased by leaps and bounds. No doubt but what many of these people came from farther east but very likely the natural increase accounts for most of this. Whatever the explanation is, the fact remains that from 1850 to 1900 the population increased from nearly 7,000 to 21,000. After 1900 there was a leveling off of the rate of increase, a plateau was reached, and then a decline was noticed. Part of the decline in population between 1920 and 1930 may be explained by the depopulating of the Park area.

Chart 2 shows the percentage of Negro population, which has never been great for the county and seems to be declining. At present the population contains less than one per cent of the people of the Negro race.

Chart 3 shows the number of people to the square mile, which compares very closely to the rate of population increase. In 1920 the peak was reached, with about thirty-eight people to the square mile. From 1920 to 1930 the population per square mile decreased, but there is nothing to indicate if the Tennessee State Planning Commission considered the great decrease of land area due to the establishment of the Park.

Table III shows the population of the districts of the county. We are particularly interested in the population of the Second and Seventeenth Districts because Pittman Center draws from these particularly. To a less degree we

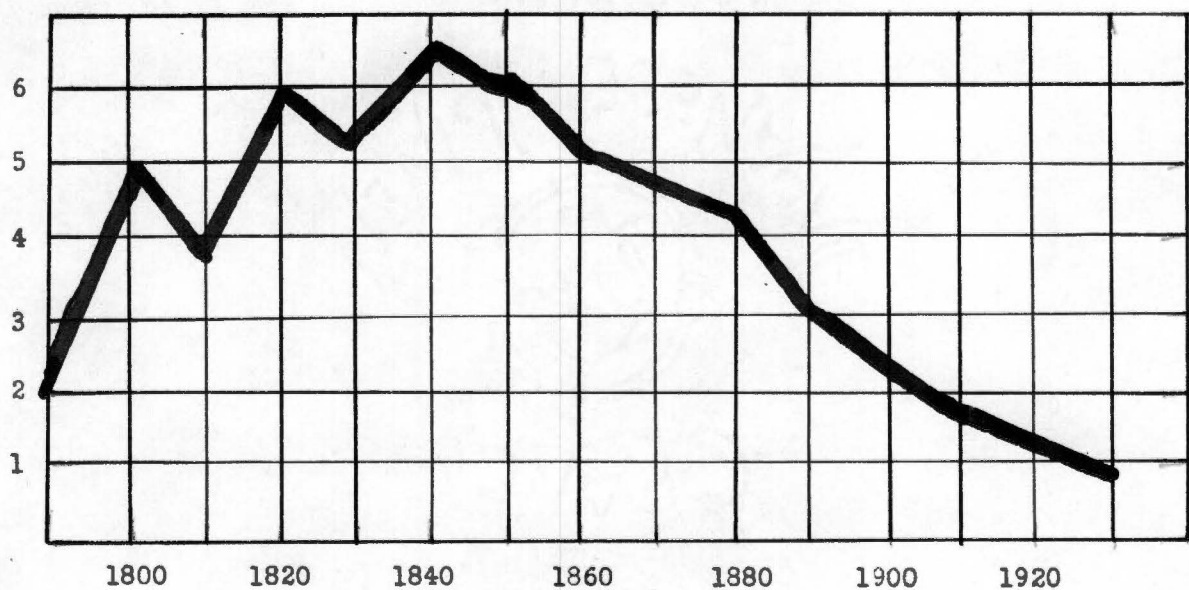


Chart 2. Percentage of Negro Population in Sevier County 1790-1930.

(Taken from the reports of the State Planning Commission.)

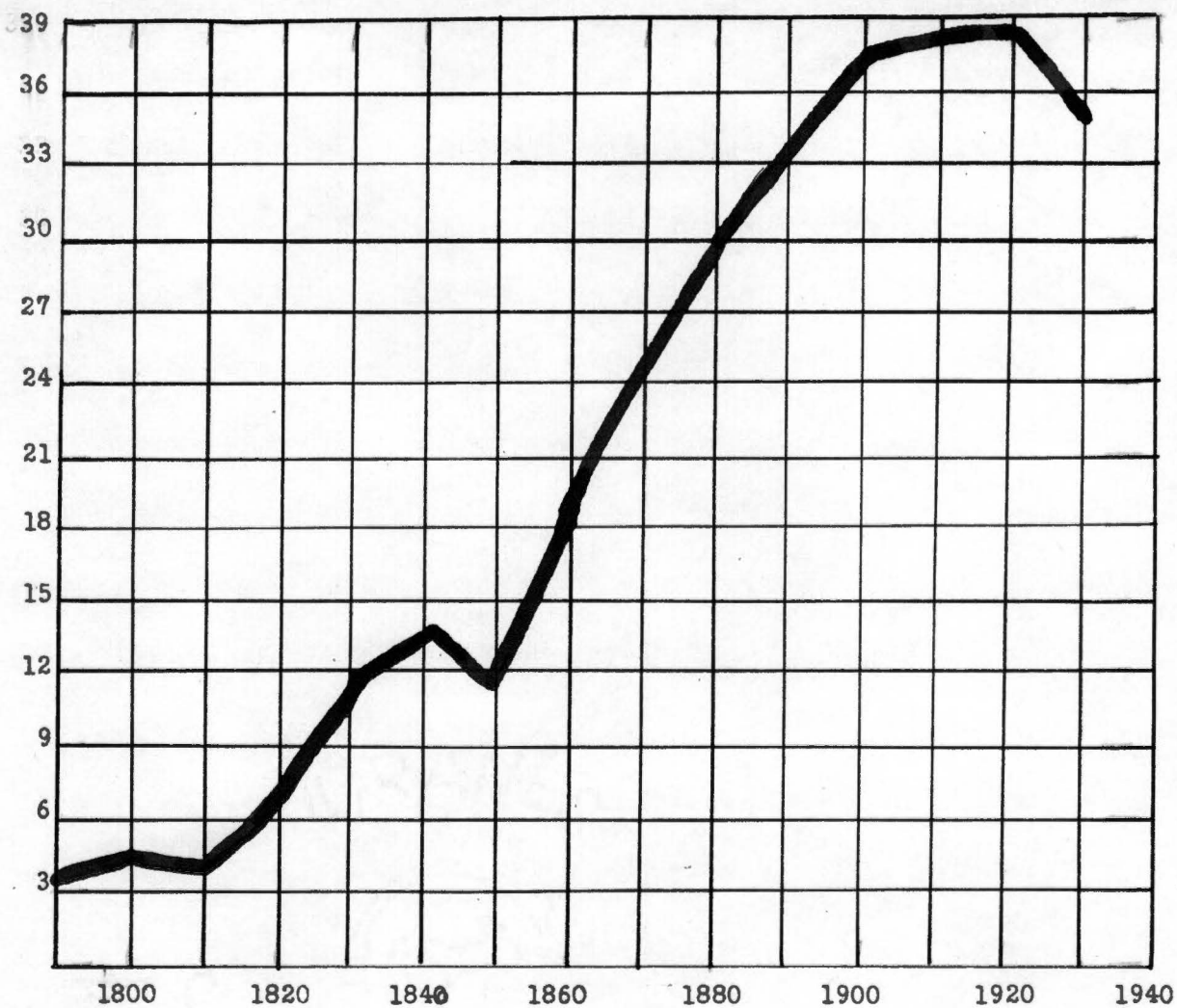


Chart 5. Number of People for Each Square Mile in Sevier County 1790-1930  
(Taken from the Population Report of State Planning Commission)

TABLE III

POPULATION OF SEVIER COUNTY BY DISTRICTS 1860-1930  
(Taken from Census Reports)

Districts	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930
First	816	939	1426	1600	1715	1772	1652	1325
Second	467	561	961	1583	1377	1386	1443	870
Third	1047	1245	1199	1324	1385	1405	1279	1978
Fourth	1000	916	1005	1095	1362	1296	1165	989
Fifth	799	950	1401	1955	2592	2881	3524	4309
Sixth	656	685	1168	674	851	902	1140	999
Seventh	842	978	980	1252	1273	1029	848	765
Eighth	666	1003	1134	1300	1335	1234	1110	1011
Ninth	775	608	969	1114	1216	1122	1213	1222
Tenth	797	945	1329	1676	1984	1869	1729	1396
Eleventh	455	614	1056	1325	1716	1020	2088	1862
Twelfth	499	475	661	693	873	746	744	718
Thirteenth		478	715	905	967	1185	1018	1044
Fourteenth		604	888	964	1018	1104	1104	1104
Fifteenth			619	769	763	742	560	495
Sixteenth				552	602	646	764	540
Seventeenth					992	978	1003	653



are interested in the First and Thirteenth for the school busses bring many high school pupils in from these districts. Outside the district in which Sevierville is located, there is no more populous district in the county than the Second if we add to it the Seventeenth as it was before 1900. The population of these districts increased steadily until 1920 after which time the population decreased because these districts were affected by the Park. From 1920 to 1930 the Thirteenth District showed a normal increase, but the Third increased from 1,279 to 1,978. This was partly due to the fact that many of the people moved from the Park land to that district, wishing to be as near to their old homes as possible.

A comparison of the two population pyramids, one for 1850, Chart 4, and the other for 1930, Chart 5, will bring out certain significant facts. There is a slight decrease in the percentage of the population under five years of age, but the greatest decrease is in the productive years from twenty to thirty-five. The great increase comes in the years from thirty-five to sixty. Apparently, the birth rate is declining and the average age is older than it was in 1850.

Chart 6, based on the vital statistics of the county, shows a great excess of births over deaths. This material is quite inaccurate due to the lack of reporting in the case of deaths, particularly, where a funeral director is not summoned.

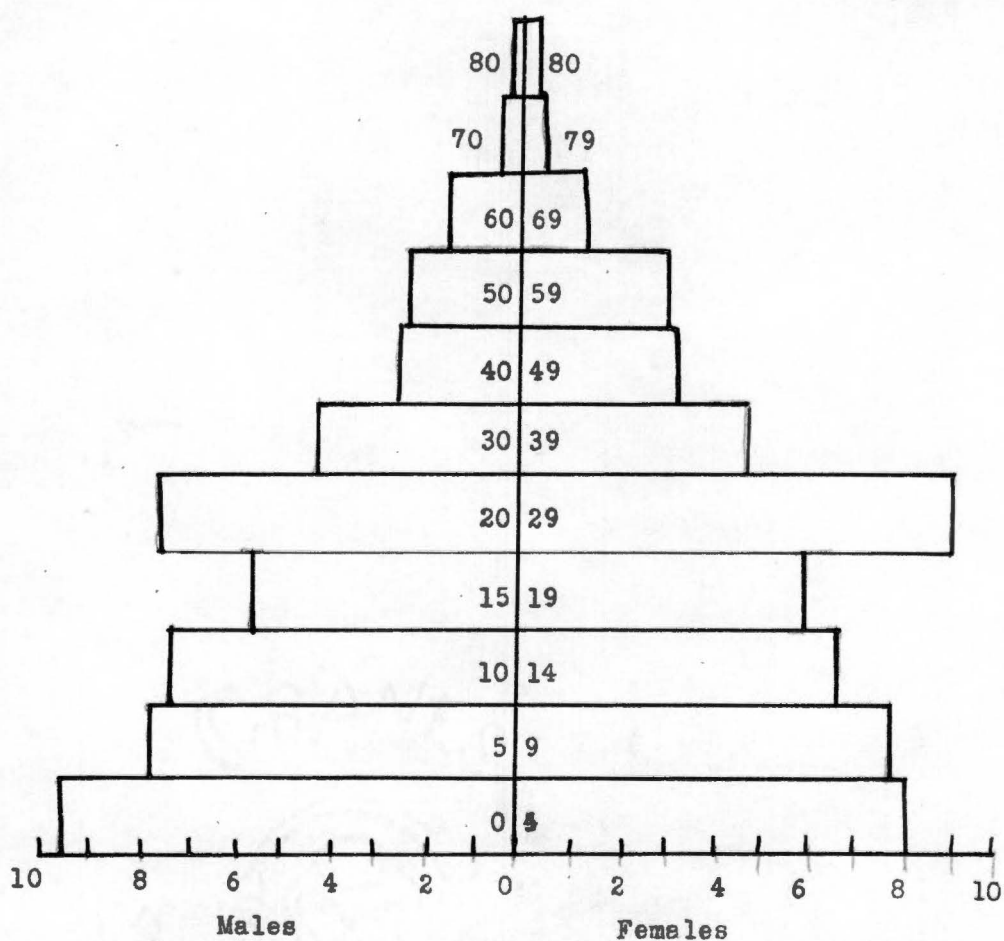


Chart 4. Population Pyramid for Sevier County 1850 showing the percent of the population in each age group.  
(Taken from the Census Reports for 1850.)

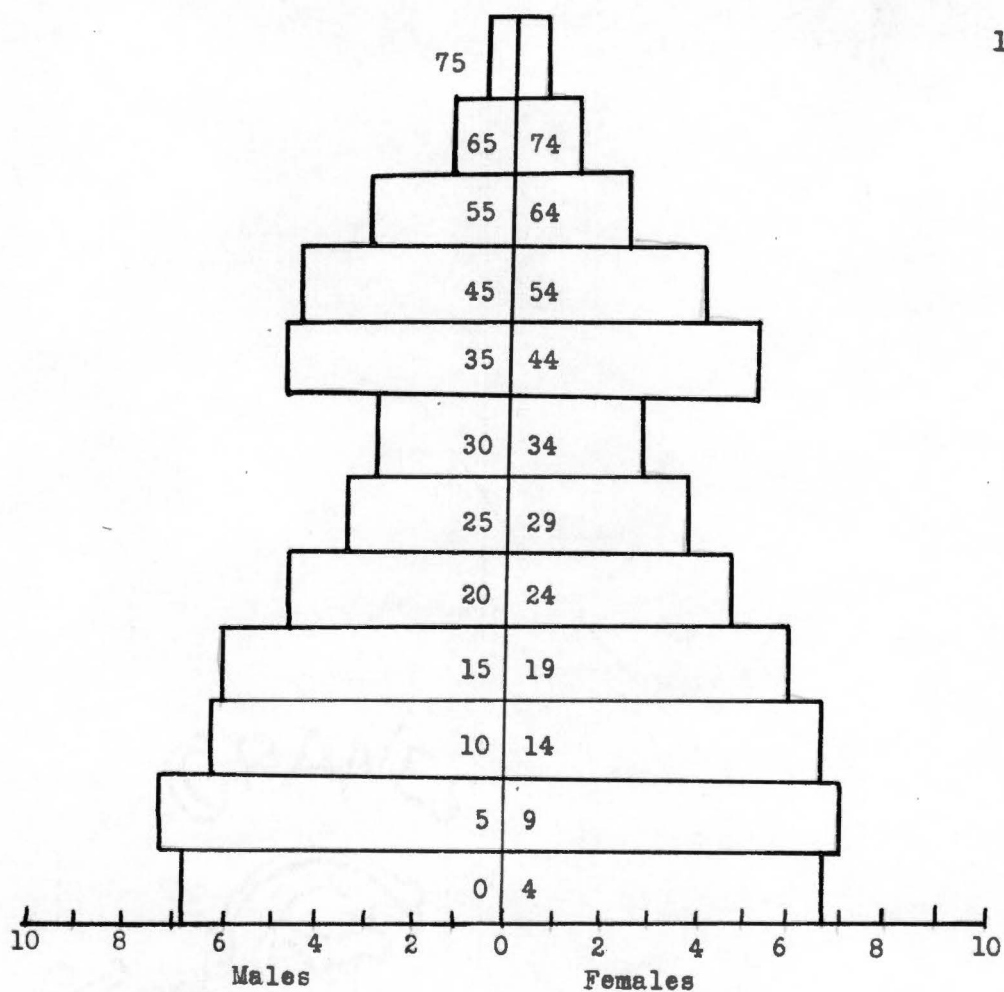


Chart 5 . Population Pyramid for Sevier County 1930 showing the percent of population in each age group.  
(Taken from the Census Reports of 1930.)

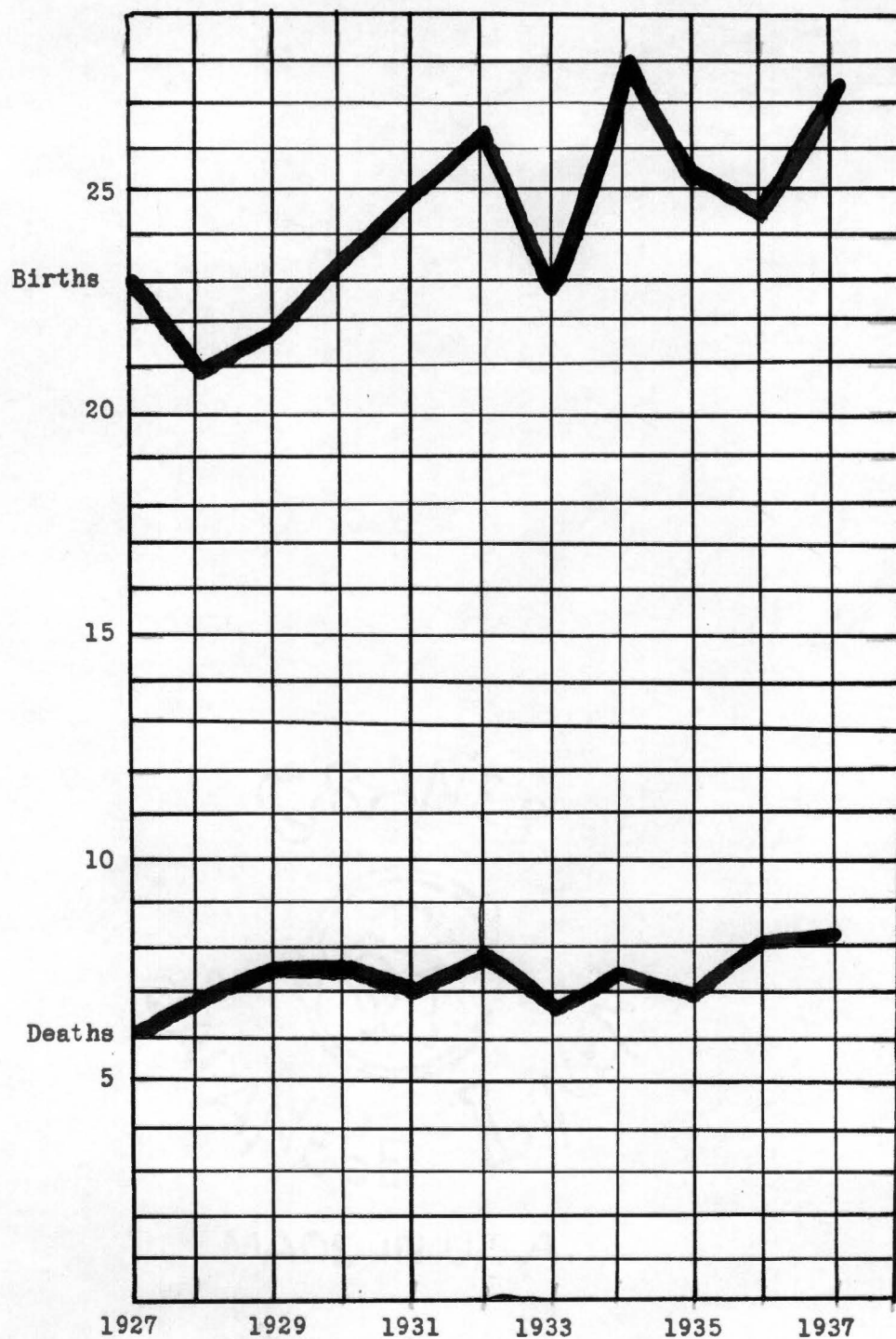


Chart 6 . Births and Deaths of Sevier County 1927-1937.  
(Taken from the Reports of the State Health Department.)



In the county there is a total of 4,106 families with an average of 4.59 persons per family. The rural farm families have an average of 5.9, and the rural non-farm 3.99.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> U. S. Census, Vol. III, 1930.

## CHAPTER II

### THE BREAKDOWN OF ISOLATION

#### The Effect of Isolation on the Individual

Pittman Center Community shows evidence of many of the effects which isolation may have on community life. Cooley, Angell, and Carr in their Introductory Sociology indicate that,

It is isolation with the accompanying difference of topography that accounts for the difference between mountainous and flat country. . . . Huntington has pointed out an interesting contrast between the Blue Grass Region of Kentucky and the poor mountain region, the feud country only sixty or seventy miles away. . . . Isolation, ignorance, provincialism, spinning wheels, corn whiskey, family feuds, over population, poverty, all attest the difficulties of transportation in the mountains, in other words the importance of location as a factor in conditioning culture.<sup>1</sup>

In Sevier County, Tennessee, the difference between the prosperous farmers living in the valley near Sevierville, with nice homes and well kept farms, and the poor farmers of the mountains is largely due to the isolation of the latter along with their poor soil. Mrs. Mary French Caldwell said explicitly there was no inherent differences in ability and

---

<sup>1</sup> Charles Horton Cooley, Robert Cooley Angell, and Lowell Juilliand Carr, Introductory Sociology (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933), p. 106.

interest between the mountain folk and the valley folk, the difference has come about because the Highlanders are isolated.<sup>2</sup>

### Illiteracy as a Form of Isolation

A study of the incidence of illiteracy reveals that the higher rate of illiteracy is usually found in an isolated section. The author once made a comparative study of the illiteracy rates of Bell County, Kentucky, which is not the most isolated county, and Mercer County, which is in the Lowlands of the same state. The per cent of illiterates in Bell County in 1930 was 11.3 while in Mercer County it was 6.2. In 1920 the percentages were 12.9 and 8.0, respectively. In that decade Mercer County had reduced its illiteracy 1.8 and Bell County reduced its illiteracy 1.6 per cent.<sup>3</sup>

The per cent attending school in Mercer County was higher for all ages but it was particularly marked in the ages 18-20. Thus, the youths in the isolated counties tend to leave school at an earlier age. Some of the lack of

---

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Mary French Caldwell was reared near the French Broad River in Sevier County. She has written "Change Comes to the Appalachian Mountaineer," Current History, February, 1930; also a book entitled The Hermitage.

<sup>3</sup> Census Reports of 1920 and 1930, Vol. III.

interest in education is probably due to the lack of school equipment in the isolated county and the lack of good teachers. Sims writes: "It (isolation) conduces to indifference toward many things that otherwise would be important."<sup>4</sup> This seems very true of education.

The lack of interest in school can also be attributed to the attitude of the parents. One junior in high school in Bell County, Kentucky, was kept out of school a whole semester because the superintendent of the school had dismissed his father from driving a team because of immoral conduct. Quite often the pupils are kept out of school to help with the crops. At times the parents say that they have made a living without an education and their children can too, although they have been satisfied to live in a small boxed house without screens, with their food consisting of corn bread and sorghum for several months of the year.

In one neighborhood near Pittman Center the children do not attend school regularly because they must walk two to three miles over the mountain to school. The road is impossible to travel with a car so a school bus cannot be used to transport the children to school. This is the Laurel section in the Community.

---

<sup>4</sup> Newell Le Roy Sims, Elements of Rural Sociology (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1928), p. 492.



### The Religion of the Isolated People

Quite often the religion of our isolated people is one series of emotional thrills after another. Personally, I have been pastoring a church in such a section. The people do not think the preacher is preaching unless he shouts, stamps around, and tells "sob stories."

Their religion is characterized also by their fatalistic ideas. The following story was told by the principal of a school in Harlan County, Kentucky, speaking before a meeting of teachers in Barbourville: On a mountain side lived a little family. The well was below the house as well as was the barn, so that the surface water could drain into it. The little boy in the home took typhoid fever and died. They made a coffin for the boy and buried him up the hill from the home. The mountain preacher standing beside the open grave said to the bereaved parents, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord." Yet we feel that his death could have been prevented.

Sherman writes in Hollow Folk, "It [Christianity] gives life and struggle to the oppressed and unfortunate. But only slight distortion is needed to render the concept a paralyzing drug to initiative and ambition."<sup>5</sup> Often young people

---

<sup>5</sup> Mabel Sherman and Thomas R. Henry, Hollow Folk (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1933), p. 159.



of the mountains are hindered in school rather than helped as they should be by their ideas of religion,

At the present time many of these extreme cases are non-existent in the community served by Pittman Center. Few people carry their guns and drinking is less prevalent. To the best of my knowledge there have been instances where people in nearby coves acted about like the ones mentioned above,

### The Building of Roads

When Uncle Joe Shultz took his produce to the market at Knoxville (42 miles away) fifty years ago he drove his oxen there in three days, sold his produce the fourth and returned in three more days. The roads were hilly and rough; bridges were nearly non-existent. Twenty years ago conditions were nearly the same. Travel was on horseback or in wagons. In the more advanced communities buggies were used but some of the trails up in the mountains were too rough and narrow for buggies. One girl in the school, writing on transportation twenty years ago, wrote that in 1922 roads in her community were beginning to be graded. Her community is at least ten miles closer to the lowlands than Pittman Center.

The following quotation was taken verbatim from a student's paper:

The roads, most of them, were mud roads twenty years ago. The gravel roads nowadays used to be mud roads with the mud knee-deep on the horses and mules that had to pull the wagons which would sink up to the axle in the mud. It used to take a week or more to go from Greenbrier to Knoxville and back, when the teamsters had to go the old mountain road as they called it. They traveled the old mountain road and down Byrd's Creek before the road down the river was made.

Ten years ago a graveled road was built into Pittman Center from Sevierville. Road building seemed to stop with this until the coming of the "New Deal" when CCC boys and relief workers continued the building of roads. Today graveled roads extend to Gatlinburg and to Cosby. The road toward Cosby was built four years ago. Before then in going up Webbs Creek toward Cosby five miles the creek had to be forded twenty times. Often the creek was past fording. It took nearly as long to make the trip in a car as it did walking because of the roughness of the road.

The newly proposed Park road from Gatlinburg to Cosby will pass through this community.

There have been great changes in the road system of this community which have made many changes in the life of the people. As the roads are improved the school bus routes are extended, allowing more pupils to take advantage of the educational opportunities. Last year a school bus brought a bus load of pupils from Jones Cove for the first time. Some of the pupils had gone to school elsewhere but most of them

could not have come had the road there been impassible. The bus started this school year with thirty-one pupils from that cove.

As the roads are improved more and more people buy old automobiles. The following tables give some idea of the number of cars in the community:

TABLE IV

NUMBER OF AUTOMOBILES IN SOME OF THE  
NEIGHBORHOODS SERVED BY PITTMAN CENTER <sup>6</sup>

Neighborhood	Number of cars	Average age of cars	Number of families
Pittman Center	8	5 years	43
Glades	2	6 years	15
Emert's Cove	5	6½ years	16
Laurel	1	10 years	12
Richardson's Cove	6	7 years	11
Jones' Cove	6		11
Fair View	2		28
Rocky Flats	8	8 years	32
Butter Creek	5	8 years	12

<sup>6</sup> Surveys taken by the pupils in the economics class.  
Later referred to as Economics class survey.



TABLE V

NUMBER OF AUTOMOBILES OWNED BY THE  
PARENTS OF THE SCHOOL CHILDREN<sup>7</sup>

Group of pupils	Number of cars	Average age of cars	Number of pupils
Grades	19	7½ years	49
Junior High School	18	6 years	36
High School	24	5 years	75

In studying the tables we notice particularly that the number of cars vary from neighborhood to neighborhood. Some neighborhoods have very few cars but others have as many as one to every two families. The age of the cars vary widely also. In the Pittman Center neighborhood the reason for the average age of the cars being three years is that many of the workers at the school have new cars. In general, the grade pupils' parents have one car to two families, but the high school pupils' parents have one car to three families.

### Newspapers and Radios

Table VI indicates the number of periodicals found in the homes of the school children.

---

<sup>7</sup> Questionnaire (Grades refer to the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth grades inclusive. Junior High School refers to the seventh and eighth grades.

TABLE VI

NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES TAKEN BY THE HOMES  
OF THE PITTMAN CENTER PUPILS<sup>8</sup>

Group of pupils	Number of pupils	Daily papers	Weekly papers	Magazines
Grades	49	16	10	35
Junior High School	36	28	14	104
High School	75	54	32	175

In the first group of pupils all the sixteen daily papers are Knoxville Journals. Of the weekly papers six of the ten are Montgomery Vindicators published in Sevierville, and three are Sevier County Republicans. The magazines taken by these homes are largely farm and home magazines. Of the thirty-five magazines ten are Farm Journals, three are Progressive Farmers, three are Southern Agriculturist, and three Woman's World.

Of the junior high school group, twenty-seven of the twenty-eight daily papers are Knoxville Journals, five of the fourteen weekly papers are Montgomery Vindicators, five are Grits, and four are Sevier County Republicans. Of the magazines thirty-four are Progressive Farmers, twelve are Southern Agriculturists, eleven are True Story, and nine are Tennessee Farmer.

<sup>8</sup> Questionnaire



Of the high school group, fifty of the daily papers are Knoxville Journals, and four are News-Sentinels. Of the weekly papers there are thirteen Montgomery Vindicators, nine Sevier County Republicans, and six Grits. Of the magazines the five most popular are: Southern Agriculturist 33, Progressive Farmer 29, Home Comfort 12, Household 11, and Tennessee Farmer 11.

By far the greatest number of magazines are on agriculture.

Table VII shows the number of radios and telephones found in the homes of the pupils.

TABLE VII

RADIOS AND TELEPHONES  
FOUND IN THE HOMES OF THE PUPILS<sup>9</sup>

Group of pupils	Number of pupils	Number of radios	Number of telephones
Grades	49	10	1
Junior High School	36	17	4
High School	75	37	7

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

A fifth of the families of the lower grades have radios but in the upper grades and high school about half of the families have radios. Formerly there were more telephones than at present. Since many people have cars they do not have so great a need for the telephone. Some of the telephones are merely community lines which do not extend to a central switchboard.

Isolation has broken down to a marked degree the last twenty years, but there remain neighborhoods where methods of communication are very inadequate. There are communities yet where automobiles are not practical even though the people may be able to afford them. The school has helped in getting the roads built. In some cases it has furnished the lumber for bridges. As the school has taught the people good reading habits, they have subscribed for more newspapers and magazines. One of the greatest difficulties facing the people is the lack of money to buy the things the school has taught them to desire.

### CHAPTER III

#### CHANGES IN THE AESTHETIC LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY

Agencies other than the school have brought about changes in the aesthetic life of the community, and it is altogether possible that these agencies might have been just as active had the school never been there. It is impossible to ascertain how influential the school has been as an aesthetic agency. The radio, for example, may help the people develop an appreciation for a certain kind of music, but the desire for the radio may have been created by the school. Also, the money spent in the community by the school may have enabled families to buy radios.

For more than century the people of the Appalachian Highlands have been singing ballads which have been handed down to them by their forefathers. Many of these ballads came with the people from England and Scotland, however, others were composed by amateur or semi-professional song writers because of some unusual experience. The most usual theme of the ballad is unrequited love. Three of the most popular in the community are: "On Top of Old Smoky," "Jack and Joe," and "Snowflakes." The last ballad compares very well in quality with other beautiful waltzes of other sections. The ballads are often sung by a lone minstrel who accompanies himself on the guitar. Some of these

minstrels can keep a crowd entertained for hours without repeating a song and without using any written music. Often the singer has learned the ballads from his father or from other people with whom he has come in contact. In recent years these ballads have been collected and copied but still there are many which have never been recorded.

In more recent times these people have come to enjoy the radio as it has become increasingly available, but the people demand the same kind of music which has existed here for generations. The following table shows the radio programs the pupils of the school prefer.

TABLE VIII

RADIO PROGRAMS PREFERRED  
BY PUPILS IN SCHOOL<sup>1</sup>

Program	Grades	Junior High School	School
Mid-Day Merry Go Round	7	15	17
Grand Old Opry	2	3	12
Jamup and Honey	2	7	8
Lum and Abner	2	5	8
Carter Family	1		3
Jack Benny			3
Barn Dance	1	1	2

<sup>1</sup> Questionnaire



Probably one reason why so many pupils prefer the Mid-Day Merry Go Round, which is a noontday broadcast from WNOX in Knoxville, is that they have an opportunity to hear it at school and may not have the chance to hear many other programs. In all, the pupils seem to enjoy the music and the comedy to which they have been accustomed in their homes.

Table IX shows the kind of secular songs the pupils like best.

TABLE IX

SECULAR SONGS PREFERRED BY THE PUPILS<sup>2</sup>

Type of song	Grades	Junior High School	High School
Popular		11	39
Modern Ballad		9	16
Ballad	4	3	7
Cowboy Ballads	2	3	5
Old Semi-classics	8	1	3
Patriotic			2

The most popular song among the pupils was, "It Makes No Difference Now." In developing an appreciation for a better type of music, apparently, the school is having very little influence. The songs which are used in the school are

<sup>2</sup> Questionnaire



old semi-classics but only three of the high school pupils and eight of the grade children prefer this type. Apparently the radio and other agencies are setting the standard for music in the community.

The pupils of the economics class found in their neighborhoods 40 phonographs, 10 pianos, 8 reed organs and 50 other instruments among the 186 families. In many of the poorer homes the visitor is surprised to find a phonograph and records.

Fifty-four of the pupils prefer string music to any other kind and only one prefers band music. No mention was made of symphony orchestras, but thirty-seven preferred swing orchestras. In the last six years there has been one concert of classical music in the community. This fact explains the pupils' lack of appreciation for a more refined kind of music.

#### Good Reading in the Community

One pupil, in describing the schools of this community twenty years ago, mentioned particularly the lack of books in the schoolroom. Many of the county schools near here are starting their libraries for the first time. Of the high school pupils 40 went to school, prior to coming to Pittman, where there were libraries. In these schools the average number of books was 611. This number includes all high

schools which pupils attended before coming to Pittman. The grade schools contain fewer books, on the average.

In the pupils' home a few books are found. The following books in Tables X and XI were mentioned in answer to the questions: "What books do you have in your home?" and "What book is used most in your home?"

TABLE X

BOOKS REPORTED IN THE PUPILS' HOMES<sup>3</sup>

Book	Grades	Junior High School	High School
Bible	15	36	75
Dictionary	2	29	45
Story books	38	17	28
School books	15	1	17

TABLE XI

BOOKS USED MOST IN THE HOMES<sup>3</sup>

Book	Grades	Junior High School	High School
Bible	44	32	73
Dictionary			2
Books on the Bible		1	

<sup>3</sup> Questionnaire

Tables X and XI show that the people have the Bible in their homes oftener than any other book and they probably use it more than any other book. They at least have a profound respect for it even though their conduct may not be guided by its precepts.

The books used most in the school library are the required readings for the English classes and the lighter novels of the western-story type. The more classical and substantial works are very seldom read except when they are required. Many high school pupils enjoy reading books which are too elementary for their age.

#### The Churches and Cultural Development

Twenty years or more ago the songs used in the churches were found in the Old Harp Books. Even before that time there existed the religious ballads and old hymns. Two religious ballads are still known here: "Sowin' on the Mountain, Reapin' in the Valley" and "Methodist Pie." Both are supposed to date back to the days of the camp meeting.

The Old Harp Books have many beautiful songs in them, nearly all of which are in a minor key. Many of the older people today who can and will sing the Old Harp selections gather during the summer to sing them all day. The editors of the Methodist Hymnal thought enough of these songs that



they included two in that volume.<sup>4</sup>

Nearly all the churches, instead of fostering a program of appreciation of the better type of church music, have developed an appreciation for the lighter church music so prevalent today in this part of the country. Three-fourths of the songs sung today in the churches are about heaven.<sup>5</sup> The people seem to live in a visionary dream of heaven. The music for the songs is syncopated with frequent breaks suitable for a swing orchestra. The song renditions, in a church service, is a race between the singers to see who is able to hold out to the end of the song and to sing all the notes louder than the others. Instruments are seldom used, consequently, the pitch is usually lost as soon as the song is started.

The people seem to think far more of their singing than they do of their preaching service. They will leave their own church service to attend a singing convention miles away. The conventions have their value as recreational agencies but they have little religious value, furthermore, they are very destructive to a constructive church program during the summer. The songs do not inspire the people to

---

<sup>4</sup> The Methodist Hymnal (Cincinnati: Methodist Book Concern, 1935).

<sup>5</sup> One of the books, customarily used a year ago, contained mostly songs about heaven. The old hymns, printed in the book, were rarely used in the churches.

live better lives, Instead they merely center their attention on heaven. A song leader can be a drunkard and cruel to his wife without being conscience stricken because the songs he leads center on another world.

TABLE XII

RELIGIOUS SONGS PREFERRED BY PUPILS<sup>6</sup>

Type of song	Grades	Junior High School	High School
Religious songs	21	16	42
"Heaven bound jazz"	9	16	26
Hymns	2	3	9
Old Harp			2

In this table we can probably see the effect of the school more than any other place. The religious songs like, "In the Garden" and "Carry Your Cross With a Smile" are sung in the chapel services at school. Few hymns are ever sung in the churches in the community outside of the church at Pittman. An appreciation for the Old Harp songs and the "heaven bound jazz" songs has come from the churches in the community. A daughter of a singing school teacher, who uses only the synecopated songs, surprised the teacher when she said she

---

<sup>6</sup> Questionnaire



liked a particular hymn better than any other song. The school is having its influence on the music preferred by the pupils.

### Beauty in the Homes

There seems to be a definite attempt to have things in the homes which add greatly to their beauty. Only ten out of one hundred sixty reported that their mothers did not have pot flowers. The average number of framed pictures found in the homes was six.<sup>7</sup>

We are unable to ascertain positively how many of the cultural changes in the community have been due to the influence of the school, but we are quite certain that it has not been as influential in this regard as it might have been or as influential as the teachers had hoped that it might be.

---

<sup>7</sup> Questionnaire

## CHAPTER IV

### CHANGES IN THE RECREATIONAL LIFE OF PITTMAN COMMUNITY

In the isolated mountain communities of long ago the recreational life of the people was very simple. While many changes have taken place in the recreational life of the people many old types of recreation still exist, especially in the more isolated places.

#### The Church as a Recreational Institution

A person going into the highlands for the first time is probably impressed with the number of people who attend the religious services, but if one looks deeper into the motives for attending, it is noticeable that they go, not so much because of their religious needs, but because of their social and recreational needs. The author has attended the so called religious gatherings, called "funeralizings" in the Kentucky Mountains, where a man's funeral may be preached several years in succession even though he might have killed ten men in his lifetime. On such occasions the local preachers are allowed to preach as long as they wish. The congregation sits on the ground without having much interest in the sermons. During the service anyone who wishes to visit with a friend goes to one side with him and stays as long as he wishes. The meetings are given religious sanction but

their main value is recreational.

In a previous chapter mention was made of the singing conventions which last all day and give many different groups a chance to participate. These meetings fill a very definite need in the lives of the people, however, their value is not religious but recreational. At present, there exists an annual Old Harp Singing at Evans Chapel, now within the Park. Similar gatherings were found here many years ago.

The revival meeting, particularly of former times, had the characteristics of a recreational institution. In all the churches of the Pittman Center Community the revival is still emphasized. Day after day people attend the meetings which give them a release from the drab life they are compelled to live. The shouting releases the emotional tension and makes life more livable. The religious service, especially the revival, has probably changed less than other institutions because the people tend to be conservative in religious matters especially where the ministry is limited in educational qualifications.

### Dances and "Rooster" Fights

Two types of recreation of former days in this community, which were probably frowned upon by the church, were dancing and "rooster" fighting. The church people here tend

to be quite puritanical as far as recreation is concerned. Three pupils out of eight, writing on recreation twenty years ago, mentioned "rooster" fights. One pupil related how the men took their fighting roosters under their arms and went to a central place for the contest.

Dancing was a very questionable pastime two decades ago. In the isolated places, now within the Park, the people usually met about once a week for a community dance of the square dance type. Usually the men brought their whiskey and became intoxicated before the evening was over. Along with the dance, or "shin dig" as it was called, went the practice of sex relations similar to community marriages, so that some people said, five years ago, they doubted if there was a legitimate child on G---. A man said he did not know if any of his wife's children were his or not but he did know that he had plenty in G---. Many of these conditions have been eliminated, but some still exist but not in the same way. A teacher who was reared in a lowland section of Sevier County is prejudiced against violin music because it, in her mind, is connected with the rough dances which were found in the isolated coves. In the community today the people are against the folk dances because they connect them with the old time "shin digs." The promiscuity of the people at the dances helps to explain the fact that the rate of feeble mindedness is especially high in some neighborhoods.



It is quite significant that some of the people are not satisfied in their new homes away from the coves, now within the Park, because they do not have the same kind of social events that they had in their old homes. Some have even committed suicide because they were so dissatisfied with their new environment.

### Informal Recreation

Formerly, working together was one of the favorite types of recreation. The old time bean hullings, pea shellings, and corn huskings furnished the people some outlet for recreation. One kind of recreation which exists to this day is the election gatherings. People go for miles to hear a political speech and they stay at the polls all day on election day, not so much interested in the election as in seeing other people. The gatherings at the stores on rainy days also fill a definite recreational need.

### Present Recreation

The coming of the Park, the establishment of the school, and the building of good roads, and the availability of automobiles have displaced many of the older types of recreation.

The automobile has enabled the people to travel more and it has consequently changed their recreation. It is

amusing to see the B family of twelve loaded in their old car and taking a ride, yet we realize that it does serve a recreational need. The automobile enables many people to go to Sevierville on Saturday even if they have no business to transact. A widow said it had been several months since she had missed going to town on Saturday even though she had to have someone take her. She probably buys groceries while she is there, but her main reason for going is merely to see other people.

### Radios

Since battery radios are becoming cheaper and improved in efficiency, we find many more radios in use in the homes. In the neighborhoods surveyed by the pupils of the economics class, 43 radios were found among 186 families. The following table shows the number of radios in each neighborhood in comparison to the number of families.

TABLE XIII

RADIOS IN NINE NEIGHBORHOODS OF SEVIER COUNTY<sup>1</sup>

Neighborhood	Number of radios	Number of families
Rocky Flats	6	33
Butter Creek	4	12
Pittman Center	13	49
Laurel	1	14
Fair View	3	26
Jones' Cove	2	11
Richardson's Cove	6	11
Emert's Cove	3	15
Glades	5	15

On an average there is one radio for every three and one-third families, however, this varies from one radio to two families in Richardson's Cove to one radio for fourteen families in the Laurel neighborhood. As might be expected, the places where the farms are larger and more fertile more radios are found.

Motion Picture Attendance

It is surprising to find that many of the young people go to theatres in Sevierville and Gatlinburg. Of the forty-nine grade children, thirty-one stated that they had attended

---

<sup>1</sup> Economics class survey. These neighborhoods are the ones touched by Pittman School.

the theatre an average of seven times, thirty-one junior high school pupils had attended forty-five times on an average, eighteen of the high school pupils had gone to the theatre an average of twenty-four times in their lifetime and forty-six had gone an average of eighteen times the last year. The eleven who failed to answer the question either could not estimate the number of times or they had not gone at all.

### Ball Games

For the last six years Pittman has had a winning basketball team. Last year it won the sectional tournament and played a good game in the regional tournament. The success of the team made the attendance at the games quite large. Twenty-five grade pupils had attended an average of four games the last year, in the junior high school thirty-three had attended an average of twelve games the last year, and seventy-four high school pupils had attended an average of fifteen games each. On the nights of the ball games the busses bring the people to the games thus enabling more to come.

The school plays very few baseball games and very few communities have their own teams during the summer. Four pupils of the grades had attended four games each, in the junior high school three had attended three games each, and



twenty-eight high school pupils had attended six games each in the last year.

Football is not played at the school, however, two in the junior high school had attended games and twelve in the high school had attended three games each.

### Games Preferred by the Pupils

Table XIV shows the kind of games the pupils prefer.

TABLE XIV

### GAMES PREFERRED BY THE PUPILS<sup>2</sup>

Game	Grades	Junior High School	High School
Basketball	11	20	45
Baseball	8	8	20
Hide and seek	7	1	
Tag	4	2	
Dominoes	3		
Checkers	2	8	16
Fox and dog	2		
Marbles	2	2	
Folk games	2		6
Soft ball		3	3
Football		2	1
Lotto		3	
Tennis			3
Bingo			6

<sup>2</sup> Questionnaire

The favorite game in all the grades studied is basketball which is emphasized much more than any other game at the school.

The parents enjoy the games as well as the children. Only twelve children out of one hundred sixty said their parents did not like to play games.

TABLE XV

GAMES PLAYED AT HOMES<sup>3</sup>

Game	Grades	Junior High School	High School
Checkers	4	18	35
Dominoes		5	10
Marbles	1	5	
Card games		1	6
Bingo			7
Thimble	5	2	
Hide and seek	4		
Baseball	6		
Blind man's bluff	3		
Lotto		3	
Folk games		1	

The older types of games, as checkers and dominoes, are more often played in the homes than other games. The

---

<sup>3</sup> Questionnaire

traditional games of the mountains, or folk games, are seldom played in the homes probably because they feel that it is dancing. Most of the people consider that any kind of dancing is a sin.

### The Importance of "Sings" as Recreation

It is very likely that the older people like to go to "sings" even better than the young people for most of the singers are older, however, the questionnaire covered only the pupils in the school. To the questions, the following answers were given:

TABLE XVI

#### ATTITUDE OF PUPILS TOWARD "SINGS"<sup>4</sup>

Question	<u>Grades</u>		<u>Junior High School</u>		<u>High School</u>	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Do you like to go to "sings"?	38	6	25	9	67	8
How many do you usually attend a year? Average	5		6		7	
Do you go to music schools?	10	27	19	14	36	38
Can you sing shaped notes?	3	35	28	8	40	35
Can you sing the round notes?	6	32	2	36	11	39

<sup>4</sup> Questionnaire

The older pupils attend more music schools and "sings" than the younger pupils, however, the percentage that enjoys "sings" remains about the same. In the singing schools taught by local men the people are taught the shaped notes only and often they are prejudiced against the round notes and against better music. Men who are good singers will not sing in church unless they have their own kind of books. Some of the pupils seem to be getting accustomed to singing round notes for twenty-nine out of one hundred twenty-seven said they were able to sing them.

The school seems to be taking care of the recreational needs of the young people, but it does not reach out to the parents except as they come to the school plays. The "sing," a local institution, remains an important recreational agency. With the coming of better methods of transportation the youths are going more to the commercialized places of entertainment.



## CHAPTER V

### THE ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF THE SCHOOL ON THE COMMUNITY LIFE

The greatest need of the people of Pittman Center Community is for financial assistance in the form of wages and payrolls for those able to work and subsidies for those unable to work. Some of the families are destitute. The land is poor and the size of the farms is small. Miss Maupin found in her study of certain families in the community: "One family of thirteen, one of twelve, and one of nine members cultivated less than fourteen acres each."<sup>1</sup> When you consider the quality of the soil and the methods used in cultivating the soil one wonders how they can exist at all. There is a definite pressure of people upon the land.

The school has helped the people with their economic problems, but too often that help has not had sound scientific planning behind it to enable it to save a bad economic situation. The regular budget of the school has been \$9,000 a year from the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Episcopal Church, however, this does not include all the money that is used to support the school.

---

<sup>1</sup> Juanita Maupin, "Living Conditions in the Pittman Center Community," (unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Tennessee, 1936).

Sevier County Board of Education pays the salaries of all the grade teachers and this year it has appropriated \$1,800 toward the salaries of the high school teachers. Most of this money is spent in the community and it does give several people work as bus drivers, repairmen, and caretakers of the nursery and the orchard. One thing is very evident among the people of the community; they consider the school a charitable institution and fail to give value received for the money they get from the school. Many look on the superintendent as a "divine santa claus" who gives them direct relief rather than helping them to make a good living for themselves. In other schools where Dr. Burnett has been the superintendent, as Tipton Hill, North Carolina, he encouraged the raising of suitable crops so the people could develop their own industry. At the place named, Balm of Giliad trees were planted along the rougher parts of the fields not suitable for cultivation. In the spring of the year the buds were clipped off, allowed to dry, and marketed for the making of patent ointments. The amount of money realized from this industry is probably not very great but, nevertheless, the people have continued their work for several years. In the community where Pittman is located, it has been difficult to find a crop suitable for the land. The people have been reluctant to try new things so they have drifted into the type of farming carried on, without much leadership from the school. There seems to be

a fear of the new.<sup>2</sup>

Crops Experimented with by the School

At one time when an agricultural teacher was employed at the school strawberries were raised commercially. The project failed because of the difficulty of getting them to the market, so it was reported. A small canning factory was started to can the tomatoes raised locally but after a few years the project was abandoned. An apple orchard has been partially successful, but too often the fruit is killed by the late frosts. When the orchard has fruit on it, every other orchard in this section also has fruit, consequently, there is a flooded market and the price is low. In the last six years there has been only one good apple crop. Too often these projects have been undertaken without the advice of the best qualified men in agriculture. Often the projects were supervised by men who had a full teaching load so they could not take the time to look after them properly.

In many respects the most successful project which has been undertaken has been the nursery, where the hemlock seedlings are set after they have been dug up in their natural state in the mountains. Local men are given contracts

---

<sup>2</sup> From a discussion of the economic problem with Dr. Burnett.



to set them out in the nursery row. Balsam firs have been used in the same way but with less success since they do not adapt themselves to new places so readily. After two or three transplanting and prunings the evergreens are ready to be sold as ornamental shrubs. During the prosperous years there is a good market for the shrubs, but they require a great outlay of money for several years before the shrubs are ready for the market. This fact makes it difficult, if not impossible, for local men to get started in the business, since they barely have enough money to exist on in many cases.

#### Topography of the Land in the Community

Table XVII is a compilation of material gathered by the economics class. An attempt was made to set up standards for judging the different types of land, but no absolute standards could be made. Probably much of the rolling land should be classed as steep land but anyway this shows the condition of the land as judged by the people themselves. A great difference between neighborhoods is noticeable. Invariably where the land is steepest and where the valleys are narrow the people are very poor. There tends to be a congestion of the population in the poorer sections also. In the neighborhood where the farms are on an average eleven acres, the average family is 5.3.



TABLE XVII

SIZE AND TOPOGRAPHY OF THE FARMS IN THE PITTMAN CENTER COMMUNITY<sup>3</sup>

Types of land	Rocky Flats	Pittman	Butter Creek	Laurel	Glades	Fair Jones View Cove	Richard- sons Cove	Emerts Cove	Total
Farms rented	7	24	2	3	5	14	4	5	68
Farms owned	26	25	10	11	10	12	7	6	118
Acres in farms	1325	1195	782	383	933	290	605	1350	7581
Woodland	186	306	225	180	475	63	250	380	2399
Pasture	186	240	149	73	134	52	107	972	2021
Improved pasture	49	55	50	6	3	5	21	365	554
Bottom land	381	246	42	18	51	20	31	266	1188
Rolling land	255	13	131	2	291	145	47	250	1134
Steep land	113	415	116	332	11	99	14	836	2173
Average size farm	43	24	65	27	62	11	55	128	41

<sup>3</sup> Questionnaire

The Rocky Flats



A Field Planted in Corn

In the neighborhoods studied by the pupils of the economics class only 31 per cent of the people are living on rented places. Many of the farmers prefer to eke out a poor living on their own little farms rather than to go to the lowlands and become a tenant. At least on his little rocky farm the owner can have a degree of independence and a degree of security for old age.

Table XVIII shows the average size farm as reported by the pupils of the school, also the per cent of farms rented and the amount of corn raised by the families on an average.

TABLE XVIII

SIZE OF FARMS, TENANCY, AND AMOUNT OF CORN RAISED<sup>4</sup>

Group	Average farm in acres	Acres of corn	Bushels per acre	Per cent of tenancy
Grades	42	7	14	38
Junior High School	63	8	14	31
High School	92½	10½	21½	36

Certain significant things are evident. The size of the farms varies as well as the yield of corn per acre. While

---

<sup>4</sup> Questionnaire



this table could not be taken as absolutely accurate it indicates that the farms on which the high school pupils are reared are larger and also more productive. It is needless to say that the people do not make any money raising corn, although it is often their main crop.

### Money Crops

Tables XIX and XX show the kinds of crops the people raise for money. Some of these have been encouraged by the school, but as a rule the people have developed these without much help from the school.

TABLE XIX

#### MONEY CROPS RAISED IN THE COMMUNITY<sup>5</sup> (Number who raise these crops)

Crop	Grades	Junior High School	High School
Tobacco	22	18	39
Green beans	16	10	19
Vegetables		2	4
Cattle		3	6
Poultry		2	
Hogs	1	1	
Tomatoes	1		10
Wheat	1		1
Potatoes			2
Strawberries			1

TABLE XX

CROP ACREAGE FOR DIFFERENT NEIGHBORHOODS<sup>6</sup>

Crops	Rocky Flats	Pittman	Butter Creek	Laurel Glades	Fair View	Richardsons Cove
Corn	168	258	32	108	61	214
Tobacco	10	25		33	1	13
Hay	107	25	30	4	51	290
Small grain	67	39	21	9	17	135
Legumes	31	21	13	5		3
Vegetables	34	94	37	91	14	74

By far the most common crop raised for money is tobacco, however, little money is realized from it because of the expense of marketing the crop. Sometimes the tobacco is taken to a warehouse fifty miles away and brought back because the warehouse is filled up. One man had to stay in Greeneville two nights and three days last winter before he was allowed to unload his crop.

Green beans grow well in this community, but, as with tobacco, the growers do not realize much on them. The market at Knoxville is easily flooded, thus, the price goes down. The next day the price is good again, but the poor farmer has not picked his beans. By the time he picks his beans and gets them to the market, it is flooded again. Many of the

<sup>6</sup> Economics class survey.

farmers do not understand the markets so they are unable to get the most out of their products.

Several farmers on the larger farms raise cattle at a profit. According to the observations of Mr. George Bushnell, who was formerly an agriculture teacher in the school, the average farm is too small for cattle raising. The poorer farmer does not have the money to stock his farm, furthermore he does not have sufficient pasture if he did have the cattle. Many are not able to build up their farms because they do not have sufficient cattle to enable them to rotate their crops so the farms are getting poorer and poorer.

In studying the crops of the neighborhoods as shown in Table XX, one thing is very noticeable. Where the people depend on corn as a main crop, as in Laurel, Pittman, and Fair View neighborhoods, the people are the most poverty stricken. In these neighborhoods over-population is evident. In the Laurel neighborhood twelve families live where three could probably make a good living. The land in these places is naturally less productive and rougher than the land in the other places. Instead of building up the land most of the farmers are depleting the land still more.

#### Lack of Tools and Stock on the Farms

A great difficulty with many of the farmers is that they do not have the tools and the work animals to cultivate



their farms. Table XXI and XXII show the number of live stock and the number of tools as indicated by the pupils of the school.

The average per family is figured on the families reporting stock. One-third of the families do not have a horse or a mule, and one-third do not have hogs.

The tool that more of the families have than any other is the sled. When it is considered that only about half of the families have harrows, one must conclude that their equipment is meager.

In the communities surveyed by the economics class the number of live stock and the number of tools were considerably less on an average than was revealed by the questionnaire. In Fair View neighborhood only nine work animals were found among twenty-seven families. One tractor was found in all the neighborhoods surveyed. Many of the families do not have the equipment with which to farm even if they did have sufficient land. A father and three grown sons near Pittman have cultivated their few acres of corn this year entirely by hand.

According to Mr. Bushnell, mentioned above, the four things that need to be done are: (1) form a co-operative to market the crops already raised, (2) study the market demands, (3) study the soil to determine its suitability for particular crops, and (4) experiment with crops thought to be suitable.

TABLE XXI

LIVE STOCK ON THE FARMS<sup>7</sup>

Live stock	<u>Grades</u>		<u>Junior High School</u>		<u>High School</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Per Family</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Per Family</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Per Family</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Per Family</u>
Cows	71	1.6	51	1.6	155	2.2	277	1.8
Horses and mules	44	1.3	29	1.3	74	1.5	147	1.4
Chickens	1816	48	2662	81	3928	63	8406	63
Hogs	112	3.8	107	4.3	227	4.4	446	4.2
Sheep	4		10		46		60	

---

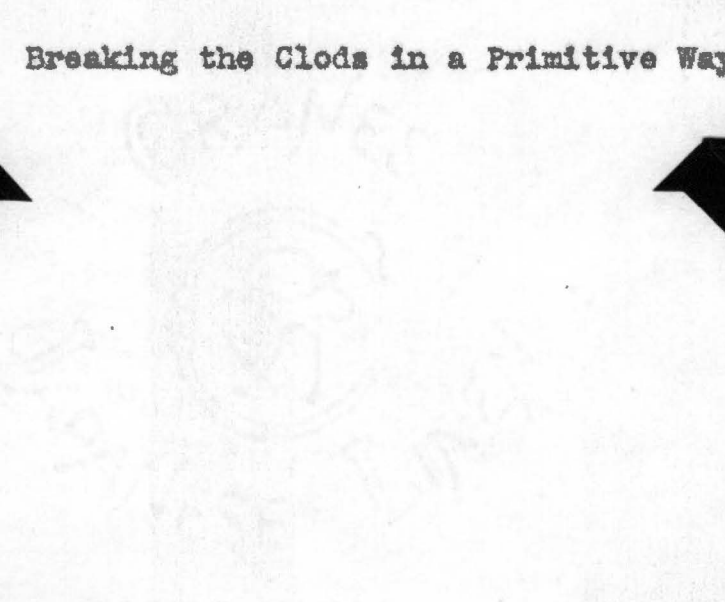
<sup>7</sup> Questionnaire

TABLE XXII  
 TOOLS ON THE FARMS<sup>8</sup>

Tool	Grades	Junior High School	High School	Total
Wagon	19	11	35	65
Harrow	25	23	42	90
Mowing machine	9	13	29	51
Sled	40	27	52	119
Hay rake	17	13	32	62
Binder	1	3	1	5

<sup>8</sup> Questionnaire





Breaking the Clods in a Primitive Way

An Ox Hitched to a Sled

Instead of the school taking the initiative in experimenting, it lays waste its timber and lets the soil wash away. Mr. Bushnell was very definite in saying the the crop that would give the people sufficient income would have to be an intensive crop rather than an extensive crop for the people do not have sufficient land. At present the people are trying to make a living raising corn when their land is not suitable for it.

## CHAPTER VI

### EDUCATIONAL EFFECTS OF THE SCHOOL

The greatest effect the school has had upon the community life has, without a doubt, been its educational effects. It has raised the standard of education in this community and has been instrumental in inspiring more of the young people to continue formal school work. The school is a class B high school according to the rating of the Tennessee State Department of Education. It has held this rating since 1927.

When Pittman Center was established the schools in the area adjacent to Pittman were poorly taught and the terms were short. No consolidations were perfected at that time. Even today many of the county schools are not taught by men of much wisdom and training, as evidenced by their formal training. Politics is in the school system to such an extent that the political friend gets the jobs all too often. The equipment of Pittman School is more adequate to meet the needs of the school than many schools in this locality, even though much of the equipment is homemade and rough. The county schools have advanced greatly in their teachers' qualifications and in their equipment since Pittman was established. The difference today between the school at Pittman and other schools of the county is not as great as it



once was, and it seems that the time will soon come when the schools will be about the same in quality and appointments.

### Training of Teachers in the County

Table XXIII shows the increase in preparation of the teachers for Sevier County since 1923.

In the last 17 years great progress has been made in the training of teachers. In 1922 there were only six elementary teachers in the county who were college graduates, last year there were thirty-three college graduates with three who had had more than five years of training. In 1922 forty teachers were high school graduates but today there are only four with such meager training. In 1922 eighty-nine teachers had partially completed high school but today only one has less than high school training.

Table XXIV shows the training of the elementary teachers at Pittman Center from 1935 to the present time. According to the training of the teachers it seems that 1936 was the year in which the teachers exhibited highest qualifications. One of the best elementary teachers, however, is one who has had only two years of college work. During this time one person appears on the report as a well trained elementary teacher, however, that person does not teach but a substitute who has never been to college does the teaching. Some of the elementary teachers are better than the average

TABLE XXIII

TRAINING OF SEVIER COUNTY TEACHERS  
FOR SELECTED YEARS<sup>1</sup>

Training	1922	1925	1928	1931	1934	1937	1939
Five years college or more						1	3
Four years college	6	10	11	11	28	22	33
Three years college			3	3	6	8	7
Two years college			5	8	32	47	65
One year college			25	63	85	76	56
Part college	4	17					
Normal graduate	4	2					
Part normal	5	20					
High school graduate	40	39	95	58	8	4	4
Part high school	89	62	16	12	7	4	1
Elementary graduate	2			3	1		
Totals	150	150	155	158	167	162	169

<sup>1</sup> County Superintendent's Reports: 1922, 1925, 1928, 1931, 1934, 1937, 1939

TABLE XXIV

TRAINING OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS OF PITTMAN CENTER<sup>2</sup>

Years in college	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939
Five years or more	1	1	1	1	1
Four years	3	3	2	2	1
Three years	1		1		1
Two years				1	2
One year	1	1	1	1	

<sup>2</sup> County Superintendent's Reports for 1935 to 1939, inclusive.



but as a rule, today, the elementary teachers are merely an average group of teachers no better than the average elementary teacher of the country as a whole.

As in practically all mission schools, some of the teachers come from other states, particularly from the places where the school has friends who support its program with contributions. The teachers from other places sometimes come with a superior attitude which makes them less effective as teachers than some who come from the local county. After the teacher from elsewhere becomes adjusted to the people, and when the people learn to know and understand him, his efforts are often quite effective. On the other hand many workers from the North do have a superior training and they make a real contribution to the welfare of the school and community. At present two of the high school teachers are from the county while three are from northern states.

The degree of success which the worker makes here is not due to his place of birth but to the way in which he does his work in the school and community. At least the workers from other states tend to break down the sectional feeling that is prevalent here.

### Salaries

To date the salaries paid in Sevier County for elementary teachers have been quite low. Table XXV gives the

average salaries of the county elementary teachers for representative years.

TABLE XXV

SALARIES OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS  
OF SEVIER COUNTY<sup>3</sup>

Year	Men	Women
1922	\$66.00	\$64.00
1925	68.75	65.60
1928	85.51	75.00
1931	77.31	76.44
1934	61.25	62.04
1937	63.20	62.54
1939	77.07	74.66

For a time at Pittman Center when funds were scarce there was a scaling down of salaries to make them more equitable. Every teacher at Pittman who has a college degree is paid \$80.00 plus house rent and water.

Salaries of High School Teachers

The salaries of county high school teachers have always been quite high although there has been a great difference between the salaries of the men and women teachers.

---

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 1922, 1925, 1928, 1931, 1934, 1937, 1939.

Table XXVI shows the salaries of the high school teachers of Sevier County for representative years.

TABLE XXVI  
SALARIES OF HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS  
OF SEVIER COUNTY <sup>4</sup>

Year	Men	Women
1923	\$157.00	\$108.00
1925	178.67	127.00
1928	225.87	125.00
1931	220.25	94.04
1934	102.36	79.35
1937	104.91	81.36
1939	109.76	91.91

The supposition is that over the years most of the high school teachers have been women, with administrative positions being filled by men. This probably accounts for the difference between salaries.

At Pittman the salaries of the high school teachers, since 1932, have all been the same, \$80.00 per month plus other concessions. The lowness of the Pittman salary scale has caused a pulling away of the best teachers into other positions, even to the adjoining counties. The school is hard pressed for money to pay salaries.

---

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.



### School Equipment

The buildings at Pittman Center are sufficiently large now to take care of the program of the school. The high school building contains eight rooms and an auditorium and the grade building has four classrooms and an auditorium. The rooms of the high school building have adequate light and are sufficiently large, but they are badly in need of redecorating. The grade building is newly built never having been used as yet. Since school boys do the janitor work without much supervision, the buildings usually look somewhat dirty and unkempt. In the high school building all the rooms are badly in need of repair.

The equipment for the school is meager. Much has been made by local carpenters who had no training in making equipment, however, the grade building is being equipped by the County Board of Education so it will probably be quite well equipped. Few maps and charts and other teaching aids are available. The laboratory equipment is better than the rest of the equipment since more has been added in the last year. In general the equipment has the appearance of not being well cared for.

The library, according to the statement of the State High School Inspector, is one of the best in this part of the state. This statement would be more accurate had the Inspector said it has the possibility of becoming one of the

best libraries in this part of the state, particularly for small high schools. The books have been sent in by friends of the school. While many which were sent in to the school had to be discarded yet enough have been in usable condition to start a library. For the last two years at least a hundred dollars a year has been expended on new books by the state and school.

Up to the present the library reminds a person of shelves with books on them arranged with very little order. Many books are in need of repair. This year a librarian was employed and the appearance of the library is taking on new life. It is estimated that there are 2,500 books in the high school library and several more in the grade library. Several good periodicals are taken and standard reference books are available.

The playground equipment consists of three see-saws made by the High-Y boys of the school for small children. A large field, of adequate size, is used for soft ball and baseball. The main game, as stated previously, is basketball, therefore, little attention is given to other games and other kinds of athletic equipment. The gymnasium is not as useful as it might be in that its use is seasonal due to the lack of a heating system.

In all, the school equipment looks good enough on the outside, but much of it is not usable because of the way it

kept. The school has had insufficient funds for several years which explains, in part, the lack of good equipment. Its equipment is probably better than that of many other high school of the county.

The home economics building, recently constructed, is well equipped. It is large enough for the needs of the school and has proved to be a real asset to the school. Here all the methods of keeping the modern home are taught and discussed.

### Courses of Study

The regular college preparatory subjects are taught, nevertheless, an attempt is made to adapt them to the needs of the pupils. Since the school is under the supervision of the State Department of Education, the standard curriculum is adhered to rather closely, however, there is a growing interest in shaping the course of study to the needs of the pupils, irrespective of the standards of the State Board of Education.

At present there are two vocational subjects taught in the school, manual training and home economics. The three classes in home economics are particularly useful for the girls, but the manual training classes are disorganized and, from the writer's point of view, are nearly useless for the



boys. At one time the school had a Smith-Hughes agricultural teacher who did much good work, but for the last three years no agriculture has been taught even though more than half of the boys are likely to become farmers, as indicated by the fact that eight-two per cent of the fathers of the pupils are farmers. Formerly agriculture and home economics were taught to the junior high school pupils, but this has not been done for the last four years.

The lack of funds has compelled the school to restrict its course of study more than is desirable. The school officials hope to be able to broaden the course of study again soon. The increase in enrollment has not been accompanied by an increase in the teaching staff, thus limiting offerings has been the rule.

#### School Attendance

As late as 1926 the high school had an enrollment of thirteen pupils that were taught by the principal and one other teacher. Table XXVII shows the attendance in the high school from 1931 to 1939.

There has been a general increase in pupils coming to Pittman High School. The great increase in the last two years has been due to the lengthening of the bus routes. A bus now brings thirty-two pupils from Jones Cove, whereas, before the bus route was established very few pupils from this community

TABLE XXVII

ENROLLMENT AND AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE  
AT PITTMAN HIGH SCHOOL<sup>5</sup>

Year	Enrollment			Average daily attendance		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1931	26	29	55	24	25	49
1932	22	41	63	17	29	46
1933	29	43	72	24	36	60
1934	33	44	77	22	38	60
1935	30	39	69	25	29	54
1936	30	39	69	23	33	56
1937	45	44	89	32	35	67
1938	40	41	81	35	33	68
1939	49	46	95	48	44	92
1940	first week		118			

<sup>5</sup> County Superintendent's Reports 1931 to 1939, inclusive.

were able to go any place to high school.

While the number of pupils in the high school has increased the number of boarding students in the dormitory has decreased. Eight pupils are now staying in the dormitories. In other years the dormitories have had as many as twenty pupils. After all, where it is possible to transport the pupils on busses, many more can be reached with the same amount of money than could be benefited by keeping them in the dormitories.

At present there are five bus routes, totaling forty-four miles, which act as feeders to the school. The longest route is seventeen miles. The condition of the road compels some of the pupils to stay on the bus as much as four hours a day. The pupils start from home before daybreak and get back home after nightfall.

Pittman Center has made available for the people a high school and has been instrumental in improving the standards in the whole school system of the county. Smoky Mountain Academy, only four miles away, has never been able to reach many of the people because it always lacked the funds sufficient to support the best educational activities. Smoky Mountain Academy has an advantage over Pittman in that it is a Baptist school in a Baptist community, whereas, Pittman is a Methodist school in a Baptist community.



### Education Received by the Parents

Very few of the pupils' parents are illiterate but the percentage of illiteracy is quite large among the population of the communities not represented in the school. The people who are unable to read are as a rule very sensitive about it. The following expression is frequently heard in local Sunday School: "I can't read the lesson. I left my "specs" at home." Quite often such a person cannot read and does not want to admit that he cannot do so.

In the poorer sections of the neighborhood there are twenty-seven illiterate adults and eleven illiterate children of school age. The children live in poor homes where the parents do not wish to send them to school. The truant officers are ineffective in compelling the children to attend school. A family living within sight of the school-house kept their children out of school all winter because they lacked books and clothing.

The parents of the pupils as an average had reached the seventh grade in school.<sup>6</sup> Illiteracy exists where the roads are bad and the people are unable to go to school. In such a neighborhood, four miles from Pittman, five adults and seven children were found to be illiterate.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> Questionnaire

<sup>7</sup> Economics class survey

### Conclusion

In conclusion it must be said that Pittman Center has pioneered in giving the people of this section of the mountains opportunity to obtain an education. The school has always maintained high standards for the selection of teachers. Since the county school system is advancing as fast as it is, probably Pittman should allow the county more responsibility for governing the grade school. Furthermore, the school should alter the curriculum to meet the needs of the pupils more adequately.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE EFFECT OF PITTMAN SCHOOL UPON THE HOMES AND THE HOME LIFE

As might be expected, the school has had direct and indirect effects upon changing the homes and the home life of the people. The increase in income, some of which has come through the efforts of the school, should enable the people to build better homes. Likewise the program of the school and contact with outside communities should make them desire to have better homes. The houses at the school are usually well kept, thus setting an example in good housekeeping.

Tables XXVIII and XXIX give a picture of the housing conditions of this locality today.

In one neighborhood there were 2.7 people to the room, while in another neighborhood there were only .9 people per room. In all the average number of people per room was found to be 1.4. A great variation is found between neighborhoods. Where the greatest number of people are found to the room, the rooms tend to be smaller in size, also.

Occasionally a home is found without a glass window. Usually windows are found, but they are not always adequate. The doors are left open in the wintertime for light.

Only 65 out of 178 had adequate screens as seen in Table XXVIII. The homes from which the pupils come have



TABLE XXVIII

HOUSING FACILITIES AND CONDITIONS IN PITTMAN CENTER COMMUNITY<sup>1</sup>

	Rocky Flats	Richard-sons Cove	Emerts Cove	Butter Creek	Jones Cove	Fair View	Laurel	Glades	Pittman	Total of homes studied
Population	152	57	66	54	67	142	100	71	213	922
Number of homes	32	11	16	12	11	27	12	15	42	178
Kind of house										
Boxed		5	2	6	4	17	8	6	8	76
Framed		6	12	5	5	5	1	8	13	55
Log			2	1	2	5	3		1	14
Rooms, total	108	65	59	44	32	73	39	69	165	654
Per home	3.4	6	3.7	3.7	3	2.7	3.3	4.6	3.2	3.2
People per room	1.4	.9	1.1	1.2	2.1	2	2.7	1	1.4	1.4
Windows per room	1.3	1.7	2.4	1.7	1.5	1.3	1.6	2.4		
Homes with screens	14	8	10	7	1	4	1	9	11	65
Heating of homes										
Fire place	27	10		10	8	16	9	10	21	111
Stove	5	1		2	3	11	3	5	19	48
Furnace									2	2
Floors										
Rough	28	4	14	9	9	23	5		21	113
Smooth	2	7	2	3	3	4	7		21	48
Lights										
Electric	1								6	7
Kerosene	31	10		12	12	27	12		36	124
Carbide gas	1	1								2

TABLE XXVIII (continued)

HOUSING FACILITIES AND CONDITIONS IN PITTMAN CENTER COMMUNITY<sup>1</sup>

	Rocky Plata	Richard- sons Cove	Emerts Cove	Butter Creek	Jones Cove	Fair View	Laurel Glades	Pittman	Total of homes studied
Running water	1						1	10	12
Exterior									
Painted	11	6		2	2	4	2	5	37
Unpainted	21	5		10	9	23	10	10	115
Improved yard	15	8		7	3	5		11	58
Shade trees	16	8		10	6	12		10	64

<sup>1</sup> Economics class survey

TABLE XXIX

HOUSING EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES  
BY SCHOOL LEVELS OF PUPILS<sup>2</sup>

	Grades	Junior High School	High School	Total
Screens				
Yes	30	23	47	100
No	20	15	20	55
Rooms per home	3.1	5.2	5	
Heating				
Fire place	34	20	54	108
Stove	10	15	16	41
Furnace		1	1	2
Covering of walls				
Wall paper	23	21	24	68
Plain	10	8	29	47
Newspaper	10	4	6	20
Painted	1	2	29	32

<sup>2</sup> Questionnaire



more screens. Of 155 homes only 55 did not have screens. The first figures are closer to the actual conditions since they take in all the homes of the community including the pupils' homes. Even though some homes have adequate screens it does not always mean that they have no flies. The garbage and animals close to the house attract the flies and the children let the flies in the house. In some cases if the people have screens they fasten them back so that they will not be bothered with them. Miss Maupin found that only 7 out of 25 homes had screens.<sup>3</sup>

According to Table XXIX one-third of the homes of the school's pupils have plain walls while one-half of the Pittman Community homes have plain walls. In nearly half of the pupils' homes wall paper is found but according to the neighborhood surveys only one-fifth of the homes had wall paper. About one-ninth of the pupils' homes are papered with newspapers while nearly one-fourth of the houses of the neighborhood have been papered with newspapers.

There is a lack of modern conveniences in the homes. The only bathrooms in the whole community are in the houses occupied by the staff at the school. With the exception of one home, no other homes have electric lights, although some

---

<sup>3</sup> Juanita Maupin, "Living Conditions in the Pittman Center Community," (unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Tennessee, 1936), p. 19.

have carbide gas lights. Miss Maupin found the usual distance water was carried was 15 to 20 yards.<sup>4</sup>

The floors in the homes are usually rough and unfinished. Only 48 out of 159 homes are reported to have smooth floors. Floor coverings are very seldom seen in the homes. Usually the floors are scrubbed each week, but no floor coverings are used on them.<sup>5</sup> The rooms look bare, often without pretty curtains. Nearly every living room has one or two beds in it, and it is not uncommon to find three in the main room of the house. Few guest rooms are found.

One thing that is very noticeable to everyone unaccustomed to the mountains is the lack of beauty about many of the homes. In the neighborhood surveys only about one-third of the homes were painted on the outside. Over half of the homes are boxed houses, usually constructed of rough lumber. Less than a third of the homes are weatherbearded, whereas 10 per cent are made of logs.

The premises around the houses are usually unattractive. Many have beds of flowers, but most of them do not have lawns in the true sense of the word. Usually they sweep the yard to keep it clean. Only slightly over a third of the homes have improved yards and about the same number have shade trees.

---

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 29.

The home often has a natural setting which is beautiful but the house and yard often mar the beauty of the place. Miss Maupin found that 14 of the 25 families studied had yards in poor condition.<sup>6</sup>

#### Comparison of Homes of Yesterday with Homes of Today

The houses built here in the last fifteen years are of the boxed type, constructed of rough lumber. Usually the home is sealed on the inside with smooth lumber but the outside boards are rough. The older houses of the community are mostly constructed of smooth timber for interiors, weather-boarded on the outside. Many of the older houses were constructed of hand-dressed lumber. Still older houses were made of logs. A few houses of today are well painted on the outside, but as a rule they are unpainted. Several years ago men had timber to sell and work to do, but today they have little income outside of their own poor farm, so they are unable to build good houses.

#### Homes of School Graduates and Others

In general it can be said that the young married people who have gone to Pittman High School have better homes than other young married people. They want screens and better

---

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.



houses. Also, the houses are usually better kept. Most of the graduates, however, have sought their homes elsewhere other than in this community. The better homes of the community belong to the graduates of Pittman Center. This is not always the case, however. A lady who had the highest I. Q. in the high school at one time has one of the dirtiest homes in the community, her home being the exception and not the rule.

Many of the homes are inadequate in size and equipment in the community. The school has helped solve this problem by giving a few people work. The best new home in the community was built with money obtained by an individual who had done typing for the school. The lady, after her marriage, went to Knoxville to take a business course after which she returned to type for the school in her own home.

One man in the community is having a bathroom put in his house, but, strange to say, his wife does not care anything about it. Many have never been accustomed to modern conveniences so they do not desire them in many cases. The people are satisfied with their old conditions and do not desire changes.

The school is helping to give the youth of the area new ideas and they are making better homes for themselves, but the older people feel more secure in the old surroundings and do not change readily. There seems to be, in this

immediate community, a strong resistance to change which the school has not been able to break down in these twenty years.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE EFFECTS OF THE SCHOOL UPON THE HEALTH OF THE PEOPLE

Table XXX shows the number of children in the present families, also the number of people in their grandfathers' families.

TABLE XXX

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FAMILIES IN THIS  
GENERATION AND THE PRECEDING GENERATION<sup>1</sup>

	Grades	Junior High School	High School	Average
Number of children in parent's family	5.6	6.5	5.5	5.8
Number of children in parental grand- father's family	7.	6.6	7.2	6.9
Number of children in maternal grand- father's family	6.7	7.3	6.5	6.8

According to these figures the number of children in the families today is about one less than formerly. When we

---

<sup>1</sup> Questionnaire. (Parent's family refers to the pupil and his brothers and sisters. The paternal grandparent's family refers to the father and his brothers and sisters. The maternal grandparent's family refers to the mother and her brothers and sisters.)



take into consideration the fact that the parents of these pupils may have more children we cannot be sure that the families today are smaller than a generation ago. It is quite possible that the parents of the high school pupils are out of the child bearing age, so it can be said that the present families, as represented by the high school pupils, are smaller than the families of the previous generation.

As far back as it was possible to obtain information, the most frequent diseases of the community have been pellagra, typhoid fever, and summer dysentery. The first and the last are still quite frequent, but the second has practically been wiped out by inoculation.<sup>2</sup>

Twenty years ago there were few good doctors and fewer good dentists. Often the people relied on herb doctors close by. No operations were performed. There was a strong opposition to operations in those days and there is some now. As the people see patients who would have died get well after operations, they conclude that after all operations probably are not against the will of God. Twenty years ago were a few farmers throughout this section who had tooth pullers which they used in pulling teeth without anything to ease the pain. A few men could also fill teeth, but this was

---

<sup>2</sup> According to a statement made by Dr. Robert F. Thomas, the staff physician of the school.

seldom done. Even today there are many people who have suffered from toothache for years. Dr. Thomas said he knew of such cases. If the people who need dental work done had the money to have it done there would probably be a shortage of dentists in Sevier County.

### The Work of the Doctor and the Nurse

For the last thirteen years Dr. R. F. Thomas has been the staff physician at Pittman Center. Before his time there were only trained nurses who carried on part of the medical work. At present the doctor and a nurse are paid by the Board of Home Missions. At different times in the past two years senior student nurses from Berea College have come here for two months' actual experience, which has been a help in the medical program.<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Thomas is well qualified for his work. At the present time he is taking a post-graduate course in Vanderbilt University, School of Medicine, to prepare himself better for his work here. The nurses are trained nurses. Dr. Thomas has been made a Diplomat of the National Board of Medical Examiners.

The hospital is equipped with an X-ray, an infra-red lamp, and common operating room equipment. The equipment is

---

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Thomas' Annual Report, 1938.

sufficient for the practice. In the hospital there is a ward with two beds, a sun porch, an office, a waiting room, an operating room, a storage room, and a laboratory where necessary drugs are kept. One of the most needed things for the hospital is a telephone connected with an outside exchange so other physicians can be called for operations and consultations. The nearest telephone is ten miles away.

Emergency and minor operations are performed at the hospital. When a person is too poor to pay, the operating surgeon who comes from Knoxville does not make a charge. The expense of staying in the hospital is nominal. It is possible for a poor person to have an operation practically without charge.

#### Number of Calls

Since Dr. Thomas has been at Pittman his practice has expanded a great deal. He estimates that his practice covers an area of 200 square miles. When he first came the roads were too rough to travel with a car, so his calls had to be within an area that could be covered on horseback. His practice has extended into new coves with the coming of better roads. From November 1936 to November 1937 he had 1,653 office calls and 892 home calls. In the same period of the year following, he had 1,737 office calls and 576 home calls.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Thomas' Annual Report, 1937 and 1938.





Dr. Thomas Making a Call

Making Sorghum

He drove his car about 16,000 miles in the year.<sup>5</sup>

### Clinics

Almost every year a tubercular clinic is held at the hospital. Assisting in such clinics are the county health department, a specialist in pulmonary tuberculosis sent by the State Department of Health, and an X-ray technician also from the State Department of Health.<sup>6</sup> At the last tubercular clinic thirty people were on hand at the hospital to be examined.<sup>7</sup>

The Committee of Friends of the Mountain Children make a contribution to Dr. Thomas' work which he uses to hold a dental clinic, in which he is aided by a competent dentist from Knoxville.<sup>8</sup>

In co-operation with the county health unit and the home demonstration agent, mother and child clinics are held about every year. While these are not attended by many mothers, nevertheless, some good is accomplished through them.

Several years ago typhoid, smallpox, and diphtheria

---

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Thomas' Annual Report, 1938.

<sup>6</sup> Dr. Thomas' Annual Report, 1936.

<sup>7</sup> A statement made by Mrs. R. F. Thomas.

<sup>8</sup> Dr. Thomas' Annual Report, 1937.

clinics were held to inoculate and vaccinate the people against these diseases, but in the last few years the county health unit has taken over this work.

### Obstetrical Cases

According to the nurse, Miss Sevy, more obstetrical cases are receiving prenatal and postnatal care than formerly. People still prefer paying the midwives about half as much as they would pay the doctor. However, during 1936 Dr. Thomas had 17 obstetrical cases.<sup>9</sup> Probably the midwives get three times as many cases as the doctors through this section.<sup>10</sup> It was unusual for a mother to have prenatal and postnatal care before Dr. Thomas came here.

### Getting Other Agencies to Help

Since the medical unit here at the school has little money to carry on the work, other agencies are solicited for aid. Dr. Thomas is Chairman of the Save the Children Fund Committee of this county and, through this agency, books and clothing for pupils in school, also, soups and other canned goods to be used for noonday lunches for the children in school have been obtained. These materials are given to the

---

<sup>9</sup> Dr. Thomas' Annual Report, 1936.

<sup>10</sup> A statement by Miss Sevy, the nurse.



interested teachers in the county schools to be used by them for the children in school. At one time money from the Friends of the Mountain Children was used for the dental clinic mentioned above, at another time money from the same source was used to have glasses fitted to needy children who suffered eye defects. Vaccines and toxoid are furnished to the hospital by the State Health Department through the county health department. The facilities of the state branch laboratory in Knoxville are also used for some laboratory work.<sup>11</sup>

#### Opposition to Medical Work

Frequently local people prefer to go to a "quack" rather than to a good doctor. One man has pellagra because he refuses to eat the proper foods to cure himself of it, even though he has the money to have the proper food. He has been accustomed to eating cornbread, sorghum molasses, and bacon so long that he "reckons he can hardly change his diet."<sup>12</sup> When a man forty years old was stricken with appendicitis his father, a mountain preacher, said, "I would rather see him dead than operated on." The delay caused by the opposition caused a ruptured appendix and general peritonitis.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Dr. R. F. Thomas, Article in Mountain Life. The article was in the manuscript form.

<sup>12</sup> A statement made by Mrs. R. F. Thomas

<sup>13</sup> Dr. Thomas' Annual Report, 1937.

The funds for medical work are limited, and yet the need is very great. Most of the doctor's salary comes from the church, nevertheless, a charge is made which is sometimes paid in produce. That this helps preserve the people's self-respect is the belief.<sup>14</sup>

In conclusion, it can be said that much has been accomplished by the medical department in blotting out disease, but that the frequency of some of the diseases remains about the same. Pellagra and dysentery are still about as common. Dysentery cannot be eliminated until people are able to have screens and secure a better water supply. When only a third of the people have screens and two-thirds secure their water supply from springs, many of which are contaminated, it is very natural that the people would suffer from dysentery.<sup>15</sup>

Mrs. Thomas has said that there are three factors contributory to disease in Pittman Center Community. They are: (1) lack of economic income to furnish proper food, (2) lack of knowledge, and (3) resistance to good medical practices. Pellagra will never be eliminated until the people know what foods to eat, are willing to eat them, and have money to buy them, particularly during the winter.

---

<sup>14</sup> Dr. Thomas' Annual Reports, 1936 to 1938, inclusive.

<sup>15</sup> Questionnaire

## CHAPTER IX

### RELIGIOUS AND ETHICAL EFFECTS OF THE SCHOOL

From the start there was opposition to a Methodist school in a Baptist community, although some Methodist churches have existed here from early times. After the school was established a Baptist church was built a mile away. The minister in making up money to build the church appealed to the people to build a church to offset the effects of the Methodist school. Much of the opposition to the school has been broken down by now, but some remains. We laugh when we hear that Mr. G. refused to send his children here to school until he found that one of the leaders was a democrat. He could feel a close relationship to the leader since the two were democrats among a host of republicans. As the people have learned that the purpose of the school is not to indoctrinate the people with Methodist ideas, more people begin to trust the education of their children to the school.

Methodist and Baptist churches alike have suffered from the exodus of the people from the Park area. The churches within the Park, which were thriving twenty years ago, have been abandoned. Along the edge of the Park there has been a concentration of the population made up, it is believed, of the less thrifty individuals. The more progressive people have left this section, leaving a residue of less qualified



leaders for the churches. A few of the older leaders remain, but few younger people are being trained to take their places. The churches along the Park line are struggling against great odds to keep going. Some of these are kept open only by the efforts of the teachers who are also ministers and church workers. The church connected with the school has good leadership in the school people, but few local leaders are found. When a local superintendent was wanted for the Sunday School, only one person was found who was able to assume the responsibility and was willing to do so.

In general it can be said that the church as a whole has been losing ground because of changes in the community. One or two churches have been organized to take the place of the abandoned ones formerly located in the Park area. In the whole community there is a conflict between the new and the old. The old church service consisted of singing, shouting, and preaching by an untrained minister. The trained teacher-minister from the school does not appeal to the older people particularly and the old time preacher cannot appeal to the progressive youths who are being educated in the school. Frequently the people are frank enough to say that the quiet type of sermon delivered by the educated minister is not preaching. Preaching according to the idea of the people means for a minister to shout, cry, and use

every emotional appeal possible to induce the people to live a better life.<sup>1</sup> The older religious service was almost entirely other-worldly. It prepared its hearers, at least to their own satisfaction, for life hereafter but failed to influence their present condition or their present social media. The modern preaching service is not attended by as many people as formerly, but the services influence the people who come much more than the services formerly. This opinion was expressed recently by a teacher who was reared in this community.

The Sunday Schools in places are well attended, but where the leading people have moved away the remaining families do not take interest in any form of religious education. The young peoples' society at the school church is well attended, but very few churches are able to promote successfully young peoples' organizations.

Table XXI reveals the status of church attendance and membership among the pupils of the school.

It can readily be seen that the church holds a prominent place in the lives of the people, especially the parents of the pupils, since only six pupils said their parents did not attend church. The Baptist church is nearly

---

<sup>1</sup> This was brought out by various conversations with leaders in local churches.

TABLE XXXI

CHURCH ATTENDANCE AND MEMBERSHIP IN THE COMMUNITY<sup>2</sup>

	Grades	Junior High School	High School	Total
<b>Sunday School Attendance</b>				
Number who attend regularly	31	25	57	113
Number who seldom attend	4	6	6	16
Number who do not attend	3		3	6
<b>Church Membership</b>				
Pupils who belong to church	13	16	38	67
Pupils who do not belong to church	17	17	38	72
<b>Church Attendance of Pupils' Parents</b>				
Baptist	21	22	50	93
Methodist	14	9	24	47
Primitive Baptist			1	1
United Brethern			1	1
Non-church goers	2	2	2	6

<sup>2</sup> Questionnaire



twice as strong in members as is the Methodist church. The Primitive Baptist church has practically gone out of existence in the last few years. Only one parent was a member of the United Brethern church. The Church of God is making gains in some neighborhoods, but none of the parents of that denomination send their children to Pittman School, as revealed by the questionnaire.

As far as the missionary preachers are concerned, they are better trained than the local ministers, but too many people are opposed to them. If no mission money is used to support the ministers, local support, even in the strong churches, is not sufficient to obtain an educated pastor. As it is, not much constructive religious work can be done without an educated ministry, but under present conditions such a ministry is often neither desired nor sufficiently supported.<sup>3</sup>

The education of the people has resulted in a breaking down of the fatalistic ideas formerly so prevalent. Even one conservative leader conceded that birth control was all right under certain circumstances.

#### Moral Effects of the School

While the churches are probably in worse condition today than formerly, yet the moral conditions of the community

---

<sup>3</sup> The salary for a pastor of four churches is less than \$300 annually.

are greatly improved. One girl wrote that she knew of only three men in her neighborhood of twelve families who had not been moonshiners or bootleggers. Today a few bootleggers do business, but the liquor is usually made elsewhere than in the vicinity of the school.<sup>4</sup>

Formerly there was much more drinking and fighting than at present. The weekly dance often ended in a fight, and moonshining caused disputes between people. All the people consulted who were really able to judge moral conditions very definitely stated that conditions are much better now than before the school was established. Murders were frequent when the school began its work.<sup>5</sup> Dr. Burnett, the founder of the school, said he had seen the community change from a lawless community to a law-abiding community. The school has not been responsible for all of these changes, but it has done its part to raise the moral standards.

The number of illegitimate children in the community has declined in the last few years. At present there are probably only three illegitimate babies in the immediate vicinity. It is quite possible that the young people are

---

<sup>4</sup> One pupil found three moonshine stills in one neighborhood ten miles from the school, but none were found closer to the school.

<sup>5</sup> Economics class survey.

learning about birth control, thus reducing the number of such births. However, as a whole the young people of the school have high moral standards.

There are murders committed yet in the community. Last year a man stabbed another to death over 15 cents in a dispute over a gambling debt. Three fathers of the pupils were murdered in the last six years.<sup>6</sup> Education is attempting to teach the people self-control and to reduce the number of fights and murders.

While the church in some localities has lost its grip on the people in the last twenty years, yet other forces, including the school, have made the community more law-abiding and more moral.

---

<sup>6</sup> Questionnaire



## CHAPTER X

### THE EFFECT OF GOVERNMENT AGENCIES ON THE COMMUNITY LIFE

We shall consider, in this chapter, the effects of the Great Smoky Mountain National Park and the "New Deal" upon this community.

#### Great Smoky Mountain National Park

In 1926 the Great Smoky Mountain National Park was officially established. When the preliminary survey was made, the plan was to include Webb's Mountain in the Park. This area would have included Pittman Center. The Park, as it was finally established, came within two miles of the school. Most of the land for the Park was bought a few years after its establishment, however, many people were permitted to remain in the Park area for several years afterwards. In 1933, a county school was taught in Greenbrier, now entirely depopulated except for a few Park employees. Within the Park area at the present time not more than six families remain near here. The effect of the great exodus of people on the population of these districts is very noticeable. In the first chapter it was pointed out that the Second and the Seventeenth districts lost 673 and 350 people, respectively, from 1920 to 1930. For a time the school looked like it would be compelled to move elsewhere, but the building of better

roads enabled the school to transport the pupils to school by bus, thus enabling it to continue.<sup>1</sup> One less teacher is employed in the grade school than formerly, but the high school is considerably larger than ever.

### Possible Bad Effects of the Park

Individuals differ in their ideas as to the benefits the Park has been to the people. The Park has at least increased tenancy and concentrated the population into a smaller area. People took the money they got for their land and often ran through with it in a year or two and later had nothing to show for it. Others made down payments on larger farms elsewhere and were unable to pay the remaining cost, so they lost the farm and the money they had already paid. The people who were less progressive tended to settle close to their old homes along the Park line, thus concentrating the population still more. The Fair View neighborhood is so crowded that the average family has only eleven acres per farm.<sup>2</sup>

The coming of the Park probably caused personality disturbances. Uncle J. S. until his death blamed the Park for his hard times. When he sold his land to the Park, he

---

<sup>1</sup> A statement made by Mr. Flynn, the principal.

<sup>2</sup> Economics class survey.

deposited the money in a bank in Sevierville. The bank failed and Uncle J. S. received only forty cents on the dollar. He never quit talking about the unfairness of the Park even though he was permitted to live there in the same house without paying rent or taxes until his death. Uncle B. L. sold his farm to the Park for more money than he could have gotten for it in a private sale, yet he killed himself because he was not satisfied in his new place in another cove. A pupil related how a man had lived on a very poor farm up in the Park on a road inaccessible to automobile traffic, yet he would give anything to be back up there on that farm again. Mrs. D. P. was not satisfied in her new home because she did not like the water, even though she agreed they could make a better living there. The writer later found out from one of her neighbors that the main trouble was that her neighbors were too refined to suit her.

For the older people it has been difficult for them to adjust themselves to new environments because life was simple in the hollows and their needs were not great. In their new homes they do not have the same kind of people to live with, so many are dissatisfied.

In the minds of some citizens, due to the coming of the Park, the community life has degenerated. The most progressive, as was stated in a previous chapter, have bought farms elsewhere with some degree of success. The less



progressive bought small farms just outside the Park line or, failing in another locality, have drifted back to this community to add to the congestion of population. Today there is a definite lack of leadership in all community enterprises. There are not enough leaders to carry on any community activity to speak of outside the leaders paid by the Pittman Center enterprise.

The Park has also lessened the chances for seasonal employment. Twenty years ago there were at least three large lumber companies operating mills within twenty miles of here. Mr. T. W., a teacher, relates that probably 50 per cent of the men worked part of the year in the lumber camps. Formerly a job could be had at any time. Usually the men cultivated their small farms during the rush season and spent the rest of the time in lumber camps. With the pressure of population on the land, the depleting of the soil, and the high natural increase, the lack of seasonal employment has made it very difficult to make a living.

At the present time, a few men from this community are working on projects within the Park, but the chances of employment are much less than formerly.

#### Possible Good Effects of the Park

The coming of the Park gave the native people a chance to sell their land at a good price. A man on Webbs Creek

wanted to sell his farm for \$5000.00, but no one wanted to buy it. When the Park was established he sold the land for more than he had previously asked for it. Not all the people who went to other communities have succeeded, but many who went to Loudon and Grainger counties have succeeded reasonably well. Some would not come back to live in this locality if they were given their old places back.<sup>3</sup> For such people the coming of the Park was a distinct advantage.

Another service the Park rendered was the scattering of undesirable people in certain communities. On one creek the people were drinkers, fighters, and sexual perverts. They were rough because of their isolation and because of the lack of good people in their neighborhood. When the Park bought up their land they were scattered into different communities. While they have not benefited the people among whom they have gone to live; however, in their new homes they are unable to carry on the same practices they were able to carry on before.<sup>4</sup>

The Park also reduced the possibility of intermarriage. In the isolated coves the young people did not come in contact with many other young people except the ones who

---

<sup>3</sup> Economics class survey

<sup>4</sup> M. R., a teacher in a nearby community, said the people who had moved in from the Park into his community were difficult to reach by the school and the church.

were related to them, therefore, it was natural that they often married cousins. Since the families are scattered now, there is less possibility that they will even wish to marry relatives. The young people in the community at this time have a better chance to marry other people than formerly for more come into the community. As many as six girls have married C.C.C. boys. Some of these marriages have been very successful while others have not. Many criticisms have been leveled at the C.C.C. boys here, but probably they are as good as the average native boy, if not better.

The coming of the Park has broadened the experiences of many of the people. The ones remaining here are contacting many more outside people than ever before. It also gives them a chance to sell produce and handicrafts to tourists which before could not be sold except through the school. One hotel has been built five miles from here and another eight miles away is under construction. A few tourist cabins have been built, but as a rule the people have not developed that enterprise as yet. The cabins already here are not modern enough to compete with the better cabins in Gatlinburg. The Park has very definitely opened up the possibility of tourist trade. When the new highway from Gatlinburg to Cosby is completed, then many more tourists should come than now. The scenery is really more beautiful than is found in other places where tourists accommodations have succeeded.



The Park has brought more opportunities for the young people. It has been hard for many of the older people to give up their homes and move to other places, but in the new places the young people have more opportunities to develop their own lives in the right way. In some neighborhoods there remain many families which are isolated. A minister was talking to the writer one time when a young man came by and acted rather strangely. The minister said, "If you had seen the place that boy lives, you would not wonder at his queer actions." Re-locating themselves has been hard on this generation, but many sincerely believe that the next generation will have a much better chance in life because of the removal of these families.

#### The Effects of the "New Deal" on the Community

The "New Deal" has affected this community in several ways. Some of the staunch republicans attribute all of our community problems to it, but others see the good it has accomplished.

The C.C.C. Camps have furnished employment for several young men just out of school. One of the graduates of Pittman was permitted to take a half year's course in college while he worked at one camp. From the county as a whole there are approximately 150 young men in these camps.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> This information was obtained from the Public Welfare Office in Sevierville.

A number of men have worked on the W.P.A. ever since it started in this community. Mr. P. said one time he did not know what he would have done had he not had the work furnished by the W.P.A. Another man who has worked on it since 1933 said his small, poor farm was insufficient to support his family of nine children besides his sister-in-law with her two children and his mother-in-law. There have been as many as 350 men in the county on the W.P.A.<sup>6</sup>

Since 1934, an average of ten boys have been employed by the N.Y.A. in this community. They have been employed on projects around the school most of the time.

At present two mothers are receiving aid for dependent children. One elderly couple is receiving \$18 a month pension and one man is receiving \$12. Other elderly people are on the waiting list. A crippled boy is now in the hospital receiving aid from the Crippled Children's Fund. Several people are on direct relief.<sup>7</sup>

The government has assisted the people a great deal in supporting their families. With the fewer chances for employment in industries close by, the people would frequently be in distress if the men were not permitted to work on the W.P.A.

---

<sup>6</sup> This information was obtained from the Public Welfare Office in Sevierville.

<sup>7</sup> Statement made by the county director of the state welfare office.

In some cases the government enterprises have not given the men and young men good training because they are allowed to loaf on the job too often. An attempt has been made by the county N.Y.A. director to set up a shop at Pittman to train young men to make carvings and other handicrafts to sell to tourists, but the shop has not been established yet because of too much competition between possible directors of the project.<sup>8</sup> For the last few years six boys and girls going to Pittman School have received aid from the N.Y.A. This has enabled some very needy people to attend school.

Probably the Park has been a benefit to the people although it has caused many hardships for the people. The "New Deal" has given some much needed assistance.

---

<sup>8</sup> A statement made by the county N.Y.A. director.



## CHAPTER XI

### CONCLUSION

It can be said very definitely that the school has done a good work of the conventional type in the educational field. It has, without a doubt, changed the moral and religious life of the people for the better. It is furnishing some needed recreation for the young people. It is also doing good work in the medical care and prevention of disease. All of these enterprises are handicapped, however, by the great economic problem which has not been solved and has hardly been attacked.

The great problem that looms in the minds of those who are social workers in Pittman Center Community is the economic problem. As it is farmed at present, practically all the land is submarginal. The economic problem affects every phase of the life of the community. Whole families have pellagra because of want, the churches are unable to support their ministers, and children are unable to go to school because of the small expense of books.

As the author sees the situation, there are four possible chances for people in this community: (1) develop an industry which will give them sufficient income, (2) improve the agricultural methods so a good living can be made, (3) move to another locality, or (4) starve to death.

With the continued increase of population and continued depletion of the land, the old agricultural methods are out of the question. The tourist trade may give the people some income, but this is uncertain. If the people decide to go elsewhere, it is a question where they should go since their means are very limited.

Pittman Center seems to be at the forks of the road. The officials may choose to let it continue as merely a good school of the conventional type or they may decide to make it really count in the community. Should it be decided that Pittman should be an educational institution alone, then the donors will begin to ask, even more than they are at present, "Why should we carry on an educational enterprise that the county is willing and able to carry on?" With the increase of state support for schools, and with the possibility of federal support, then we wonder if the pioneering the church has done in the educational work has about reached its logical conclusion.

There remains some territory close here yet untouched by the school, as exemplified by the Evan's Chapel Baptist Church section beyond Webbs Mountain, but the territory is definitely limited by one side of the Park and by the territories served by Sevier County High School, 16 miles away; Cosby High School, 15 miles away; Smoky Mountain Academy, 4 miles away; and Pi Beta Phi Settlement School, 10 miles away.

On the other hand there is a whole mountain section here in the need of financial assistance, not direct relief, but help to solve their problem, and what is Pittman doing about it? Nothing effectively! No co-operatives have been established to aid the people in marketing their products, and no scientific experiments are being carried on to find suitable crops for the land. No single project can be pointed to, by a teacher talking to a pupil, as an example of the crop he can raise when he starts to farm.

#### What Can Be Done to Improve Pittman?

There is a great need here for interpreting the school program to the people in order to enlist their co-operation. A Parent-Teacher Association is a much needed thing. The older people particularly do not have a sufficient amount of recreation. There is still a great need for instruction for the adults in home making and related subjects. It has been planned for the home economics teacher to give some instructions to adult women in the community, but she already has five classes to teach in the school. The W.P.A. has had an adult education project here for four years, but it has not reached enough of the people to be very effective. The former agriculture teachers have done some adult education work, but it was usually considered theory and not applicable to the farms here. At present not even agriculture is taught in the school.



In conclusion, it can definitely be said that the school should start adult classes in home making and in the study of economic problems. What about the workers to carry on this work? The time has come when the county is able to support a grade school entirely, so Pittman should let them assume that responsibility. In the last year, however, a grade school building has been constructed which should have been built by the county board of education. The money that is now being used for the grades would help in carrying on an adult program.

Beside the adult education program, more effort should be made to teach the subjects in the high school which are needed instead of conventional subjects. More vocational subjects are needed in agriculture, handicrafts, and more subjects to make the pupils at least conscious of the problems they will face in life would be desirable. An effort is being made to obtain books for the library dealing with some of these problems.<sup>1</sup>

If Pittman continues its responsibility for the elementary school, then a greater effort should be made to adapt the course of study to the needs of the people. The large number of feeble-minded children throughout the school,

---

<sup>1</sup> In the last two years 20 books on social and economic problems have been added to the library.

offers a problem of such magnitude that a special effort should be made to fit the school to even the needs of these.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY



## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Armstrong, Anna W., "The Southern Mountaineer," Yale Review, March, 1935.

Coldwell, Anna Mae, "A Study of the Child Training Practices of Thirty-five Families of Pittman Center, Sevier County, Tennessee." Unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee, 1936.

Cooley, Charles Horton, Robert Cooley Angell, and Lowell Julliard Carr, Introductory Sociology. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933.

Hooker, Elizabeth Robbins, Religion in the Highlands. New York: Home Missions Council, 1933.

Maupin, Juanita, "A Study of Living Conditions in Pittman Center Community." Unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee, 1936.

Raine, James Watt, The Land of Saddlebags. New York: Council of Women for Home Missions and Missionary Education Movements for the United States and Canada, 1924.

Sherman, Mandel, and Thomas R. Henry, Hollow Folk. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1933.

Sims, Newell Le Roy, Elements of Rural Sociology. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1928.

Taylor, Alva W., "Social Aid Comes to the Mountaineer," Christian Century, January 10, 1935.

### Reports

Report of the Tennessee State Planning Commission on Population, 1938.

Sevier County Superintendent's Reports, 1923 to 1939, inclusive.

Thomas, Dr. R. F., Annual Reports 1936, 1937, and 1938.

U. S. Census Reports on Population, 1850-1930, inclusive.

Vital Statistics Reports of the State Health Department, 1927 to 1939, inclusive.

## APPENDIXES

## APPENDIX A

### QUESTIONNAIRE ON PITTMAN CENTER COMMUNITY

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

#### I. Communication in home

1. What magazines do you take in your home? Name them.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What newspapers do you take in your home?

Daily \_\_\_\_\_ Weekly \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you have a radio? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you have a telephone? \_\_\_\_\_

#### II. Cultural life in community

5. Name some of the books you have in your home.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. What book is used most in your home? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Did the school you attended before coming here have a library? \_\_\_\_\_

8. How many books were in the library? \_\_\_\_\_

9. What kind of secular music do you like best? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Name your favorite religious song. \_\_\_\_\_

11. Name your favorite secular song. \_\_\_\_\_

12. What radio program do you like best? \_\_\_\_\_

13. How many framed pictures do you have in your home? \_\_\_\_\_

14. Does your mother have pet flowers? \_\_\_\_\_

#### III. Recreation



15. What games do you like to play? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
16. What games do you play in your home? \_\_\_\_\_
17. Do your parents like to play games? \_\_\_\_\_
18. How many times have you gone to a Moving Picture Theatre? \_\_\_\_\_
19. How many basketball games have you attended in the last year? \_\_\_\_\_
20. How many baseball games have you attended in the last year? \_\_\_\_\_
21. How many football games have you attended in the last year? \_\_\_\_\_
22. Do you enjoy going to "sings"? \_\_\_\_\_
23. How many "sings" do you usually attend during the year? \_\_\_\_\_
24. Do you attend music schools? \_\_\_\_\_
25. Can you sing the shaped notes? \_\_\_\_\_  
Can you sing the round notes? \_\_\_\_\_

#### IV. Home life and occupations

26. How much schooling has your father? \_\_\_\_\_
27. How much schooling has your mother? \_\_\_\_\_
28. What is your father's occupation? \_\_\_\_\_
29. If it is farming, how many acres are there in your farm? \_\_\_\_\_
30. How many acres of corn do you plant? \_\_\_\_\_

31. How many bushels of corn do you usually raise? \_\_\_\_\_
32. What does your father raise to sell for money? \_\_\_\_\_
33. List the number of each kind of livestock you have.  
Cows \_\_\_\_\_ Horses \_\_\_\_\_ Mules \_\_\_\_\_ Hogs \_\_\_\_\_ Chickens \_\_\_\_\_  
Sheep \_\_\_\_\_
34. Write "Yes" or "No" after each of the following to indicate if you have it. Wagon \_\_\_\_\_ Mowing Machine \_\_\_\_\_  
Hay rake \_\_\_\_\_ Harrow \_\_\_\_\_ Sled \_\_\_\_\_ Binder \_\_\_\_\_
35. Do you have a car? \_\_\_\_\_ What model? \_\_\_\_\_
36. Do you have screens over the doors and windows? \_\_\_\_\_
37. Where do you get your drinking water? \_\_\_\_\_
38. How many rooms are there in your home? \_\_\_\_\_
39. How is your home heated? \_\_\_\_\_
40. How many glass windows are there in your home? \_\_\_\_\_
41. Are the walls in your home plain, painted, papered with wall paper, or papered with newspapers? \_\_\_\_\_
42. Do you live on a rented place? \_\_\_\_\_
43. How many different houses have you lived in? \_\_\_\_\_

#### V. Health

44. How many boys in your family? \_\_\_\_\_
45. How many girls are there in your family? \_\_\_\_\_
46. Do you have any dead brothers or sisters? \_\_\_\_\_  
If so, what caused their deaths? \_\_\_\_\_
47. How many aunts and uncles have you on your father's side? \_\_\_\_\_

48. How many aunts and uncles have you on your mother's side? \_\_\_\_\_

49. Are both your mother and father living? \_\_\_\_\_

50. If one is dead, give the cause of death. \_\_\_\_\_

VI. Religion

51. How often do you go to Sunday School? \_\_\_\_\_

52. Are you a church member? \_\_\_\_\_

53. What church does your family attend? \_\_\_\_\_



# APPENDIX B

## SCHEDULES USED BY THE ECONOMICS CLASS IN SURVEYING THEIR NEIGHBORHOODS

### Schedule 1. Population by Age Groups

Head of family	0-5	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	75-74	75 and over
	M: P	M: P	M: P	M: P	M: P	M: P	M: P	M: P	M: P	M: P	M: P	M: P
	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:

Schedule 2. Education of Adults and Children  
Not in School

	Number
Illiterate children	
Illiterate adults	
Grade reached by people in school	
Fourth grade	
Sixth grade	
Elementary graduate	
One year high school	
Two years high school	
Three years high school	
High school graduate	
One year college	
Two years college	
Three years college	
College graduate	
More than college	

### Schedule 3. Houses and Yards

Head of family	Number rooms	Number windows	Adequate screens	Type house	House painted	Improved yard	Houses with shade trees
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:

### Schedule 4. Farms

Head of family	Farm rented	Farm owned	Acres in farm	Acres woods	Acres pasture	Bottom land	Steep land	Rolling land
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:



### Schedule 5. Crop Acreage

Head of family	Corn	Wheat	Hay	Legumes	Tobacco	Tomatoes	Beans	Potato
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:

### Schedule 6. Farm Animals

Head of family	Milk cows	Beef cattle	Horses	Mules	Sheep	Hogs	Chickens
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:

# Schedule 7. Farm Equipment

Head of family	Tractor	Wagons	Mowing machine	Turning plows	Hay rake	Disc harrow	Harrow
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:

# Schedule 7. Farm Equipment (continued)

Head of family	Grain drill	Corn planter	Cultivator	Grist mill	Truck	Automobile
:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:

# Schedule 8. Furnishings and Interior of Houses

Head of family	Wall covering	Floors	Light- ing	Heat- ing	Reed organ	Piano	Radio	Phono- graph	Other in- struments	Framed pictures
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	: